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WHAT IS QUAKERISM?

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR.*

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CHRISTIANITY AND BUSINESS.

FIRST LESSONS ON THE HEBREW PROPHETS

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD.

THE TRUE WAY OF LIFE. (Third Edition.)

THE HISTORIC AND THE INWARD CHRIST  
(Swarthmore Lecture, 1914).

THE MEANING OF MEMBERSHIP.

THE RELIGION OF EXPERIENCE.

# WHAT IS QUAKERISM ?

An Exposition of the leading Principles and  
Practices of the Society of Friends,  
as based on the Experience of  
"The Inward Light."

BY

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*Author of "Authority and the Light Within," "The Historic and the  
Inward Christ," "The True Way of Life," &c.*

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## PREFACE

THIS book represents the first attempt that has been made for many years to set forth in connected outline the special beliefs and practices of the Society of Friends, and to show how they are vitally related to the central principle of the Inward Light. The writer takes entire responsibility for the views expressed, and has not hesitated to state his own opinions ; but he has endeavoured, so far as limited space allows, to treat the subject historically, and to indicate what he believes to have been the position of the Society at different periods. While profoundly convinced that the Quaker faith is essentially true, and that its fearless presentment, in life as well as word, is an urgent need of the present day, he is yet sadly conscious of the corporate weakness of the Society of Friends, and has endeavoured to avoid the note either of complacency concerning its achievements or of censoriousness towards other Christians.

In other books the author has dealt with theological aspects of the subject, and has endeavoured to point out some of the internal difficulties which arose from

what he conceives to have been a defective presentation of the central principle of the Inward Light. Such criticism is for the most part omitted here, in order to leave room for a positive exposition of Quakerism.\* For American readers especially—and it should be remembered that some 86 per cent. of the people called Friends are to be found on the other side of the Atlantic—a word seems to be needed to explain why the author has written throughout from the standpoint of an English Quaker, and why he has made little or no attempt to indicate the rather different positions of the various bodies of Friends in the United States and Canada. He recognises with thankfulness that each of these bodies has an important contribution to make to an understanding of what Quakerism really is; but the attempt to set forth this would have required the discussion of theological and other questions for which this book is not the place. Those who wish for information on these divisions, whose interest to Friends is both poignant and sorrowful, may be referred to his book *Separations, their Causes and Effects*.

The book is specially written for the help of groups of Friends and others who are making a study of Quaker principles; but the author hopes that it will also be found useful for private reading, and for the information of many who are attracted to the Society and who desire more knowledge of its ways of life and of the foundations on which they rest.

\* See, however, p. 39 (note).

There is, however, a wider circle to which this book, imperfect as it is, may yet appeal. The spread of education, and the quickening of social sympathies, have together yielded a larger outlook on life. Men and women are everywhere seeking for a Truth that does not rest upon the precarious foundation of traditional creeds, but is firmly grounded in experience; a Truth that shall harmonise the discoveries of science with the intuitions of religion, and human ethics with spiritual faith. The conflicting sects are slowly learning that none of them holds a monopoly of Truth, but that they must seek for unity in diversity—each recognising a value in the contribution of others. It is in this spirit that the author has sought to interpret the faith of the Society of Friends.

He is grateful for the suggestions and criticisms of several of his friends who have been kind enough to read his proofs.

EDWARD GRUBB.

Croydon, *February*, 1917.

## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

IN this Edition I have made a few minor alterations and additions, but nothing has been brought to my notice that appears to require substantial correction.

*July*, 1919.

E.G.





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## CHAPTER I

# THE NATURE OF THE QUAKER MOVEMENT

"It was in the focussing upon moral effort that the Quakers differed most from the other sects of the Commonwealth period. Their 'views' were not novel or original. Every one of their peculiar ideas had already been proclaimed by some individual or by some religious party. What was new was the fusing of their ideas into one living truth, which was henceforth to be *done*, was to be put into life and made to march . . . So absorbed in work for human betterment were they, so consecrated to the task of re-making the world, that many who have studied the early Quakers have seen only this practical—or perhaps ideal—aspect of the movement, and have neglected the mystical feature of their religion. But both these aspects belong together as much as the concave and convex sides of a circle do. . . . The Quaker movement is significant, is worth studying, because it shows both strands woven into one organic whole. There are marks of weakness and imperfection apparent in it. It has, as all earthly movements have, its obvious limitations and its petty traits, but it is nevertheless a very real *experiment in religion* and one that is full of lessons for our age and for all Christian communions."

RUFUS M. JONES, Introduction to *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. xliii., xliv.

## PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY: THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT

WILLIAM PENN gave to one of his books on the Quaker movement (published in 1696) the title "*Primitive Christianity Revived*"; and this title very well expresses what the movement really was. George Fox and his friends had no thought whatever of setting up a new sect among the various Christian bodies of their day: Episcopalians (Roman and Anglican), Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists. What they felt to be urgently laid upon them was to bring back



the whole Christian Church from error to truth : from the "long night of apostasy" into the new day which had dawned in their own souls.

What, then, was Primitive Christianity? I believe the best description of it is *The Religion of the Spirit*. We will enquire a little later what "the Spirit" meant (and means); meanwhile, let us see what in the days of the Apostles was regarded as making a person a "Christian."\*

In the second chapter of the Acts we find Peter claiming that the day foretold by the prophet Joel had now come: when God would "pour forth of His Spirit upon all flesh"—not only upon a few highly-endowed prophets, but upon *all* who would receive it—upon young men, old men, servants and hand-maidens, so that they should "prophesy": that is, should be lifted up into the same kind of spiritual experience in which the prophets of old lived and worked and taught (Acts ii. 14-21).

In the tenth chapter there is the narrative of the Roman centurion Cornelius—a devout man, who is divinely directed to send for Peter, and whose messengers Peter is divinely guided to accompany; but not until he has received a new revelation that he is not to call "common" that which "God hath cleansed." Peter tells Cornelius about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; and while he is speaking the Holy Ghost falls on all that hear the word. Peter's Jewish companions are filled with amazement that on common "Gentiles" should be "poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost"—for they had imagined that such gifts were for the chosen race alone, and that no one could

\* I find it well at the outset to give with some fulness an indication of the nature of New Testament Christianity, which I believe to have been essentially of the "Quaker" type, as distinguished from the institutional or the dogmatic. If any readers find this exposition tedious, they are recommended to pass on to the second chapter, and to come back to it later.

possibly be so favoured by God without first becoming a Jew. But the fact is unmistakable; and Peter demands that since Cornelius and his family are clearly Christians they shall be baptized. This accordingly is done. The special point to notice is that they were regarded as Christians not because they had been baptized, but because they had received the Spirit (Acts x. 1—xi. 18). The baptism was simply an outward testimony to the inward fact.\*

So, again, in Paul's Epistles it is possession of (or by) the Spirit that makes a person a Christian. "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His . . . for as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 9-14). So also in the first epistle attributed to John we are told, "Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He gave us" (1 John iii. 24). "*To each one [in the Christian Church],*" Paul says, "*is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the [general] good*" (1 Cor. xii. 7). *Any* Christian in the public assembly may receive a "revelation" (1 Cor. xiv. 26, 30).

The upshot of this brief enquiry is this: that the Christians in Apostolic days were the men and women of the Spirit: *the Church was the company of inspired people*, and this without any sharp distinction between clergy and laity.

If we ask further what "the Spirit" really meant, and how the inspiration showed itself, we see that for a time there were remarkable outward manifestations, as on the Day of Pentecost: signs like wind, flame, or earthquake; "speaking with tongues" (whatever that may have been); a profound emotional disturbance that might be mistaken for drunkenness. (Acts ii. 1-4, 13.; iv. 31; x. 46; xix. 6; Eph. v. 18). But

\* Compare the narratives of the converts at Samaria (Acts viii. 5-17), and those at Ephesus (xix. 1-7).

these visible and audible signs of the Spirit's presence did not last ; their use, it is clear, was temporary ; and, when Paul has to point out how the presence of the Spirit is *really* and permanently to be known, he goes much deeper. " The fruit of the Spirit," he says, is *a new moral life*, showing itself in " love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control " (Gal. v. 22, 23) : the kind of moral life that had been lived perfectly by Jesus. The Spirit is that which entering into a person's inmost self transforms him into the likeness of Christ (2 Cor. iii. 18). Of all the " signs of the Spirit," the greatest and most unmistakable is *Love* : no mere passing emotion, but the sort of love that Jesus showed to people in need, to children, to His executioners : a love that ordinary human nature can rarely command and can never counterfeit. " We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love " (1 John iii. 14 ; compare iv. 12 and 1 Cor. xiii.). The inspiration is, above all, an inspiration of *power to love other people* with a love that is spontaneous, unforced, and un-selfconscious.

It is also an inspiration of *wisdom*, which enlarges a person's understanding, and raises his whole being to a new level of insight, efficiency, and power—as Peter's bold speech in Acts ii. shows that he was raised by the experience of Pentecost (compare Eph. i. 17, 18).

But " the Spirit " is more than *that which* inspires a man. The first Christians, after Pentecost, regarded it rather as *Him who*. " The Spirit " has a mind and will : He controls the movements of the Apostles and directs them what ~~they~~ they are to do : where they are to go and to refrain from going, and how they are to solve such difficulties as arose with the demand that on the Gentile Christians should be imposed the burden of Jewish observances (Acts viii. 29, xiii. 2, xvi. 6, 7, xv 28).

And this *personal* note is due to the fact that the Spirit was now regarded as the actual and living presence of *Jesus Himself* (Acts xvi. 7, R.V.). That this was the early Christian belief is clear from the fourth Gospel, where Jesus assures the disciples that He will Himself return to them as the "Comforter" (John xiv. 16-18); and from Paul's declaration that "the Lord (*i.e.*, Jesus Christ) is the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18, R.V.). "The Spirit," in short, in the minds of these Christians meant that Jesus, though crucified, was not dead but alive—that He was living and active in the society of His followers, reproducing in them His own spirit, His own character, His own way of life; with all that this might involve of suffering and sacrifice, of glad adventure for the redemption of mankind and the transformation of the world, in reliance solely on the power and love of God.

I will conclude this section by a few brief quotations from recent writers, which confirm, I hope, the truth of what has been said above.

"Christianity in the golden age was essentially a rich and vivid consciousness of God, rising to a perfect experience of union with God in mind and heart and will. It was a personal exhibition of the Divine in the human, the Eternal in the midst of time. When we get back to the headwaters of our religion, we come ultimately to a Person who felt, and in childlike simplicity said, that 'No man knows the Father save the Son,' and 'I and my Father are one.' The direct impact and power of His life on His followers is the most extraordinary thing in the gospels, and the continued power of His life over men is the most marvellous thing in human history."\*

“ The whole New Testament is one and clear in its teaching concerning the new and vital element in Christianity. Its power lay in ‘ the Spirit ’ which through Christ went forth into the world and made its abode in the hearts of believers. Christianity is distinctively ‘ the Dispensation of the Spirit ’—the entrance into the world, through Jesus Christ, of a new principle and power of spiritual light and life.”\*

“ A Christian is a man who, having believed the gospel, has by that act received into himself the Spirit of Christ as a life principle, the permanent inspiration of his thoughts and acts . . . In the beginning all the believers felt themselves to be inspired . . . Christendom must get back to the religion of the Spirit if it is not to lose its title of nobility and the image of its first ideal.”†

#### THE RISE OF ECCLESIASTICISM.

The growth and development of the organized “ Catholic ” Church, from the second to the sixth centuries, very soon obscured the bright ideal with which the first Christians started out. This development was mainly due to the apparent necessity of safeguarding the Church from two dangers. In the first place, the intense religious experience of the early Apostles and their converts was not maintained as the generations went by, and the spring of personal inspiration began to dry up. Little men, pretending to to infallibility, and sometimes seeking their own gain, brought discredit on the assumption that anyone was inspired at all ; and the need for order in the Church, and for edification in its services, led to a rigid restriction of the early “ freedom of prophesying.”

\* W. L. Walker, *The Spirit and the Incarnation*, p. 34.

† A. Sabatier, *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, pp. 307, 305.

Thus we witness the rise of a regular ministry with set forms of worship, and with sacraments—which could only be administered by those duly ordained.\* “The prophet speaking by revelation yielded to the bishop ruling with authority.”†

The second danger which confronted the Church was that of “heresy.” The Greek mind, even when it embraced Christianity, did not lose its fondness for unbridled intellectual speculation, and, in Asia Minor particularly, many Christians who were capable of philosophic thought devoted it to the attempt to solve the mystery of Christ’s nature. Starting with Paul’s thought of Christ as a Divine and heavenly being; they concluded that it was only *in appearance* that He became man at all. Their speculations are known under the general name of “Gnosticism.” The Gnostics‡ were people who thought well of themselves, as *knowing* things of which the many were ignorant; and Christianity in their hands became *a system of ideas* rather than a life to be lived.

How did the Church meet this and other similar dangers? The real remedy for “heresy” is vigorous Christian life, which will (by a kind of instinct) accept ideas that nourish it and reject those that do not; but,

\* The difficulties caused by “apostles” and “prophets” who professed an inspiration that was not really theirs are naively shown in *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, which is believed to be a manual of Church Order in use in some of the churches early in the second century. “Let every Apostle that cometh to you be received as the Lord; but he shall not stay save for one day; but if there be necessity, the next day also; but if he stay three, he is a false prophet. . . . If he ask for money, he is a false prophet. . . . No prophet appointing a table in Spirit shall eat thereof—unless he is a false prophet.” (*Didache*, xi. 4 ).

† Rufus M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, p. 27.

‡ There is a useful account of the Gnostics in Workman, *Christian Thought to the Reformation*, pp. 32-39. It was essentially a kind of Oriental mysticism applied by Greek thought to Christian subject-matter and marks in some ways a reaction towards Paganism.

as the fire of its own life was burning low, the Church had not the faith and courage to trust to this as its main defence.\* Instead, its bishops spent their best energies in trying to foil the "heretics" with their own weapons, and to build up a system of ideas which the Church could guarantee as "true," while all others were "false." In the endeavour to settle what was true doctrine, and to keep out of the fold all who did not embrace it, the bishops changed Christianity from a religion into a theology, and substituted the rigid walls of a dogma for the free expansiveness of the Spirit.

Thus it seems that "ecclesiasticism" grew up just as spiritual life died down. To maintain order and apparent unity the church chose the easier path of organization and definition, rather than the more difficult one of seeking for and trusting to abundant life. It magnified the authority of its priesthood, who alone had power to administer the rites whereby men entered the Church, and to throw out those who differed from the opinions which they, collectively, had pronounced orthodox. A Christian came to be regarded as a person who had undergone certain rites, and who held (or professed) certain views; no longer as one "led by the Spirit," in whose life and conduct were being manifested the spirit and character of his Lord. The note of personal revelation and inspiration, which was so strong in primitive Christianity, came to be regarded as dangerous, and eventually as heretical. The Church preferred order to liberty, and organization to inspiration; the path of apparent safety to the path of perilous adventure which its Master had trodden.

\* I say "its *main* defence," because I do not wish to undervalue the search for intellectual truth, in the religious sphere. The Church needs a strong theology as much as a living animal needs a skeleton; but the skeleton can only live as a support for the vital organs of the body.

## PERSISTENCE OF THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT.

Happily, however, the inner life of personal and direct religious experience ("the Religion of the Spirit") at no time *completely* disappeared from the Church, though it fluctuated greatly. From time to time "revivals" of true spiritual religion recurred, starting usually with the experience of some one person who felt in himself the fresh bubblings of the perennial spring of genuine Christianity, and who thus became the leader of a new movement in the Church. Most of the great Christian "Mystics" have been such leaders; and for the most part they were frowned upon and even persecuted by the authorities of the Church, whose system left no room for fresh and original inspiration. These movements, beginning with the "Montanism" of the second and third centuries, I must not here attempt even to sketch in outline. They have been ably treated by Dr. Rufus M. Jones, in his *Studies in Mystical Religion*, where he shows that all through the darkest ages of the Church the note of first-hand religious experience continued to be struck. It was this note, often drowned as it was by the clamour of the persecutors, which probably more than anything else saved the Christian Church from utter decay. Breaking forth from time to time in great religious movements like those of the Waldenses and Albigenses, of the Franciscans, of the German Mystics, and the "Friends of God," of the "Brethren of the Common Life" in Holland, of Wyclif and the Lollards, it prepared the way for that mighty uprising which we know as the Reformation.

## THE REFORMATION AND ITS FAILURE.

. The Reformation began in the recovery by Luther and others of the sense of direct and personal relations with God, through Jesus Christ, and in their consequent



shaking off of ecclesiastical authority with the corruptions that had become inseparable from it. Whatever it may have been in its origin, it was not in its working out a pure victory for "the Religion of the Spirit," because its leaders thought it necessary to set up another outward authority in the place of that which they repudiated. But, side by side with the Reformation of which the history books tell us, there went on another movement, despised and largely obscure, which was much more in line with those at which we have been glancing. It is known under the general name of Anabaptism, and may be regarded as the extreme wing of the Reformation. Comparing the Anabaptists with the Protestant leaders, Dr. Rufus Jones says:

"They had alike rediscovered Christianity in the Bible; and the new vision worked within them like new wine. Those who had this vision, and with it the power of restraint and the gifts of statesmanship to see what would *work* and what would not work in the world as it actually was then, became the leaders of the Protestant Reformation, and have their renown in the pages of history. Those who had this vision and were resolved to *make the world fit the vision*, with no shade of levelling down and with no hairs-breadth of compromise, became the leaders of Anabaptism, risked everything for the cause they believed in, flung out ideals which have been guiding stars for us ever since, went to death in terrible fashions, and fell on almost total obscurity."\*

Faced with the double conflict, against Rome on the one hand and the Anabaptists on the other, the

\* *Studies in Mystical Religion*, p. 371. Anabaptism has a bad name, because of the wild excesses of a fanatical section who set up a "New Jerusalem" at Münster, in Westphalia, in 1534. The Münster Kingdom was, however, as a writer in the *Encyclopædia of*

successors of the first Reformers chose once more the path of apparent safety, and set up, in place of the authority of an infallible church, another outward authority—that of a supposed infallible Bible. That this was not the first intention of Luther and his fellow leaders is perfectly clear. In their view the Spirit working within a man enabled him to judge and to criticize Scripture itself.† But gradually Protestantism left its true foundation in personal Christian experience, and became the religion of a Book, just as Catholicism remained the religion of a Church. And this virtually meant that the direct and immediate presence of God in human hearts was even harder to find than before. The Church, through its priesthood in the Sacraments and the Confessional, might sometimes declare a living word from God, and convince weary souls that Christ yet lived with men; but how could such a message really come through those who taught that all the living words of God were in the pages of a book, and that He had never spoken direct to men since the volume was completed?

The dogma of the infallibility of the Bible, as it was preached by the Puritans of the seventeenth century, marks the failure of the Reformation. The movement had set out to recover true Christianity as the free Religion of the Spirit; it issued in a new bondage

*Religion and Ethics* says (Vol. I., p. 411), “a hideous caricature of the whole movement.” “Beyond dispute, the Anabaptists in general lived quiet and harmless lives, in striking contrast to the society about them.” “They were several centuries in advance of their age.” They suffered frightful persecutions at the hands of the civil authorities in Switzerland and elsewhere, in which both Catholics and Reformers joined.

† See A. Sabatier, *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, pp. 155-165. He says: “The constitution of the dogma of the infallibility of the Scriptures marks the advent of the period justly known as ‘the Protestant scholastic,’ which began on the very morrow of the disappearance of the Reformers.”

to the letter of the Scriptures, through which alone God or Christ was to be found. Once again the Church had played for safety, and had well-nigh lost its life.

There was another reason why multitudes were dissatisfied. Under the prevailing "Calvinism" the Father of love, of whom Jesus taught, had been replaced by a Terror, who by His own inscrutable decree had ordained the greater part of His offspring to everlasting torment. Christ had died for the elect alone; for the rest there was no salvation. In the late Bishop Westcott's words, "The doctrine of reprobation was then commonly preached with a crude violence which shook the very foundations of morality."\* It was a doctrine of despair for the many, and of false security for the few; absolutely incompatible, as almost every Christian in the present day perceives, with faith in a God of love.

### THE "SEEKERS" IN ENGLAND.

The result was that outside the Puritan churches there were, in this country at least, in the middle of the seventeenth century, large numbers of earnest and seeking souls who could find no satisfaction in the prevailing religion, whether Episcopal or Presbyterian or Independent. They were known as "Seekers," and it was from them that the Quaker movement drew a great part of its adherents.†

These "Seekers" were *waiting* for God to manifest Himself with an authentic voice, such as they could not find in the churches of their day. "They wait," said John Saltmarsh, who had been one of them, "for

\* *Social Aspects of Christianity*, Chapter on "The Quakers," p. 127.

† See *Studies in Mystical Religion*, chapter XIX.; also Bräithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, Chapter I.

power from on high, finding no practice of worship according to the first pattern. They wait in prayer, pretending to no certain determination of things, nor to any infallible interpretation of Scripture . . . . *They wait for an apostle, or someone with a visible glory and power, able in the spirit to give visible demonstration of being sent.*"

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE QUAKER MOVEMENT.

This brief account of the historical background of early Quakerism, very imperfect as it is, seems necessary if we are to understand the nature of the movement we are to study. The reason why so many of the "Seekers" attached themselves to George Fox was that he seemed to be the "apostle" they were looking for: a man who could "in the spirit give visible demonstration of being sent." He was able to convince them that he had really *found* what they were seeking: that God had really spoken to him as He spoke to the ancient prophets. And, as they came under Fox's influence, he led them into the same first-hand experience that he himself enjoyed, so that they found their leader and teacher was not Fox but Christ. This was the purpose of all his preaching—to "bring people off" from human teachers, and from human systems, to God, or to Christ, (he uses the words without apparent difference of meaning,) who "has come to teach His people Himself."\*

That is the real significance of the Quaker movement. It was, like many of the "mystical" revivals at

\* These words of Harnack, on the teaching of Jesus, may be applied also in some measure to Fox: "Jesus sought to kindle independent religious life, and He did kindle it; yes, that is His peculiar greatness, that He led men to God so that they lived their own life with Him." —(Quoted in *Studies in Mystical Religion*, p. 2.).

which we have glanced, a recovery of the root and spring of primitive Christianity: the intense consciousness of a direct and personal relation with God, through Christ, who had lived the Divine life perfectly here among men, and whose ever-living Spirit remained to be their Teacher and their Guide, leading them forth, like the early Church, on paths of perilous adventure for the redemption of the world.

### WHY IT AROUSED OPPOSITION:

It is not denied, of course, that there were saintly Christians in the other religious bodies of the seventeenth century—men like Samuel Rutherford, Richard Baxter, and John Bunyan, and many in the Anglican and Roman Churches; nor should we for a moment question the sincerity of their belief in the Holy Spirit, or the reality of its influence in their lives. The main difference between their position and that of Fox was that he was prepared to *trust* the personal experience of the Spirit's immediate presence and guidance, to such an extent as to base his whole Church polity upon it—and therefore to sweep away all the outward safeguards which had been built up in the hope of maintaining order and unity in the Church: an ordained ministry, with sacraments and set forms of worship; traditional creeds; and even the letter of Scripture, regarded as an external "rule" of belief and practice. Without such safeguards there seemed to them to be no protection against utter anarchy and disintegration, and so with one voice they condemned the Quakers as pestilent heretics.

Nor can it be contended that they had not reason on their side. The ferment of religious thought, amid the great upheaval of the Civil War, had produced a multitude of "sects and schisms," and all kinds of fantastic notions were being put forward by people

who professed to be inspired of God.\* The licence of Anabaptism at its worst seemed likely to be repeated in England, and men might well be excused for falling back on outward authorities as a bulwark against "the anarchy of the Ranters." And indeed, many of these "Ranters" were the cause of serious trouble to the Quakers, whose freedom from authority seemed to give them ample scope. It is a strong tribute to the wisdom and sanity of Fox and his Friends that they were able, in the power of the Spirit, to curb these wild men and women, and to prevent them from wrecking the Quaker movement.†

"The fact is," says W. C. Braithwaite,‡ "that the Ranter position afforded no test by which the individual could distinguish between the voice of the Spirit and the voice of his own will. The Quakers, on the other hand, were 'Children of the Light,' and insisted that there could be no guidance of the Spirit apart from a walking in the light. Accordingly their message became an antidote to Ranterism, and reclaimed many of the Ranters themselves to a truer type of spiritual religion. It also supplied the need of many who might otherwise have become Ranters."

\* A miscellaneous collection of these was made by Edwards in his *Gangræna* (1646).

† Writing of the "Seekers," William Penn says, "But so it was that some of them, not keeping in humility and in the fear of God, after the abundance of the revelation were exalted above measure; and for want of staying their minds in an humble dependence upon Him that opened their understanding to see great things in His law, they ran out in their own imaginations, and mixing them with those divine openings brought forth a monstrous birth, to the scandal of those that feared God. . . . These people obtained the name of Ranters, from their extravagant discourses and practices. For they interpreted Christ's fulfilling of the law for us to be a discharging of us from any obligation and duty the law required; . . . insomuch that divers fell into gross and enormous practices."

‡ *Preface to George Fox's Journal*, (Bicentenary Edition, p. xxv.).

† *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 22.

“ In spite of every infirmity and disproportion,” wrote the late Bishop Westcott,\* “ Fox was able to shape a character in those who followed him, which for independence, for truthfulness, for vigour, for courage, for purity, is unsurpassed in the records of Christian endeavour.”

The Quakers held, with all the mystics, that revelation and inspiration belong not to the past only but to the present ; they kept their souls alert and expectant ; they took the risk of trusting absolutely to the Spirit, and the Spirit did not fail them. L. 1269

\* *Social Aspects of Christianity*, p. 129.

## CHAPTER II

### THE INWARD LIGHT

"Now is the Day of Beauty broken forth nigh you, even in you. Yea, Glad Tidings are come unto your wearied souls, by which a pure Love is begotten in you. The everlasting Truth has been declared among you, and has reached the witness for God in your Consciences; and it is sealed upon your hearts and has become your Teacher."

JAMES PARNELL (1655), written in Colchester Castle, where he was done to death at the age of 19.

#### GEORGE FOX'S DISCOVERY.

THE Quaker movement started with the discovery by George Fox (and by others, either through his instrumentality or independently) of a living and personal relation to God, and of what they believed to be His direct revelation of Himself in their souls. Though others had made it before, to them it was none the less a new and startling discovery. The passage in which George Fox relates his great experience is familiar, but must be quoted here. After telling of his long search for light and truth, and the vain efforts he had made to get help from men, he says:

"When all my hopes in them and in all men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do; then, O! then I heard a voice which said 'There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition'; and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy."\*

He insists, again and again, that this and other "openings" were direct revelations to himself, and

\* Fox's *Journal*, Bicentenary edition, p. 11. The passage is not in the "Cambridge" *Journal*, the earlier pages of the original MS. having been lost.



were not due to anything that he had heard or read, even in the Scriptures.

“ These things I did not see by the help of man, nor by the letter, though they are written in the letter, but I saw them in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by his immediate Spirit and power, as did the holy men of God, by whom the Holy Scriptures were written. Yet I had no slight esteem of the holy Scriptures, but they were very precious to me, for I was in that Spirit by which they were given forth ; and what the Lord opened in me, I afterwards found was agreeable to them.”\*

This note of personal discovery, of the certainty of Truth inwardly revealed, is almost universal in the writings of the early Quakers. Thus William Dewsbury, one of Fox's earliest collaborators, writes :

“ This I witness to all the sons of men, that the knowledge of Eternal Life I came not to by the letter of Scripture, nor hearing men speak of the name of God ; I came to the true knowledge of the Scripture, and the Eternal rest, by the inspiration of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”†

And Edward Burrough, in the Preface to *The Great Mystery* (1659) says the same of the Quaker pioneers in general :

“ After our long seeking the Lord appeared to us, and . . . brought us by his power to know and see perfectly that God had given to us, everyone of us in particular, a Light from himself shining in our hearts and consciences.”

These men and women write in the glow of a first-hand experience of God in their own souls ; and their witness is not in the least invalidated by anyone who

\* Fox's *Journal*, Bicentenary edition, p. 36.

† Dewsbury's *Works*, p. 54.

proves that many of the truths, which they believed had been revealed to them, had been stated before by Anabaptists, or members of the Family of Love, or individual mystics like Jacob Boehme. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear," said Job, "but now mine eye seeth thee." There is a vast difference between hearing, and even approving, a statement made by another, and seeing it for ourselves to be true. Many of us must have known the experience of passages of Scripture, or other words with which we have long been familiar, taking on a wholly new light and reality when for the first time we discover what they really mean. We have come in some measure into the place where the writers were, and perceive for ourselves the truth of what they intended to say.

#### WHAT IS "THE INWARD LIGHT?"

This may suggest what is meant by the "Inward Light"; and I think it may be well to try to set forth what seems to me to be the truth of the matter, in modern language and in my own way. Unless we have a clue, provided out of our own experience, the language of the seventeenth century is hardly intelligible to some of us.

The subject is a difficult one, and it is not possible to make it perfectly clear. All that human words can ever do is *to suggest experience*; and it is only as we have some measure of experience that words have meaning for us. Consideration of the "Inward Light" takes us into the deepest regions of human personality—into places where the Divine and the human meet; and there is no map or diagram of these places that will make everything plain and easy.

As a boy I used to read poetry, and had lessons at school on English literature; but it was not till I was over twenty years of age that I began to have a notion

of the difference between *good* poetry and *bad*. The perception of the *beauty* and *worth* of good poetry was a kind of "inward light": no one else could give it me; it must be my own or nothing. My teachers could help me by telling me what to look out for, by explaining allusions, and so forth\*; but all this, until I woke up to poetic beauty, was only like a scaffolding without a building inside it. This does not mean that "it is all a matter of personal taste." There is a *true standard* of beauty or worth, (though at school I had not reached it,) as to which all competent people agree. Nor does it mean that the "feeling" of beauty is all a matter of emotion. Emotion usually *accompanies* the "feeling," and is an effect of it, but the perception itself is different from—

- (a) the sense-impressions of words, sounds, forms or colours;
- (b) the intellectual processes by which we can learn, or other people can tell us, *about* their significance;
- (c) the emotion the perception of beauty arouses in ourselves.

This is perhaps one of the simplest cases of an "inward light."

Next we may take *personal character*. How do I know what sort of a person my friend is? By his words, looks and acts. Yes; but how do I know what these *mean*? Only by having a clue in my own inner experiences: I know what it is to feel pride, anger, love, courage, and so on. If my experience has been one-sided, I may quite misinterpret the facts: a selfish person often imagines others to be actuated by some *motive* of self-interest which is not really there.

\* What is much more, some of them could communicate, in measure, their own enthusiasm—but only in so far as I was able myself to receive it, by beginning to share the personal insight that caused it.

This is true even of characters *in history* : we interpret them by a kind of "inward light." And we may get to know a historical person so well that no new facts discovered about him can fundamentally alter the picture, though they may shed new light upon it. Above all, it is true in the case of Jesus Christ. A Christian may be thought of as a person whose inward eyes have been opened to behold the beauty of His character, and whose life is being moulded by what he has seen.

Such knowledge of Jesus Christ is conditioned by *facts* recorded in the Gospel narratives, facts which we apprehend intellectually ; and by the *interpretation* of those facts which has been arrived at through the experience of the Christian Church. It is usually through persons whose own eyes have been opened to see Him that the knowledge comes to us. But no one is a Christian through knowing the facts or submitting to the Church's authority ; he is only a Christian in so far as an Inward Light reveals to him something of what Jesus was, and as he allows his character and conduct to be moulded by that revelation.

We have very little idea what a "perfect" character would be like until we see it exhibited. And Christian experience (in which we may share) everywhere testifies that it has been exhibited in Jesus Christ. As W. Herrmann says, Jesus is the only person who has not had to be ashamed of what he was, compared with what he knew and said. In all other cases the men whom we pronounce the best give us such a perception of goodness that we measure their own shortcomings by it.\* It is by an "inward light" that we perceive the perfection of Christ's character.

Just as we have little idea of the meaning of "perfection," so it is with the meaning of "God." We fancy we know what that word stands for : we think

\* See Herrmann, *Communion with God*, p. 91.

of all power, all knowledge, presence everywhere, and so forth. And, when we are told that "Christ was God," we trouble ourselves by asking whether He had those qualities. Really, as William Temple has powerfully shown in *Foundations*, the statement "Christ was God" is meant to give us information not about Christ but about God. We learn what Jesus Christ was from the Gospel records through the Inward Light; and what the "dogma" does is to tell us, *God is like that*. The dark word "God" is made to glow with new light, as it did for the first Christians: the character of Jesus shows what qualities of love, goodness, humiliation, self-sacrifice, suffering for the sin and redemption of men, we are to attribute to God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."\*

Now we see what this discussion is leading up to: it is by the "Inward Light" that we have the knowledge of God. This knowledge does not come to us by observation of the things about us, like our knowledge of the world of nature, nor by intellectual proof, nor by the testimony of others embodied as the authority of Church or Bible. All these are invaluable as aids to, and preparations for, the true knowledge of God, but they cannot give it us until we come to the point of "seeing" with our own inward eyes. In other words, the knowledge of God comes *by revelation*. But we have tried to lay a strong foundation for this statement by showing that it does not stand alone, that the same is true in measure of all that makes life truly worth living, all that in the end really *matters*: our experience of beauty, goodness, moral worth and personal character. God reveals Himself to us in all that we know for ourselves of the True, the Beautiful, the Good;† and most of all in the One Life of perfect

\* Compare Glover, *The Jesus of History*, pp. 237-240.

† See Clutton-Brock, *The Ultimate Belief*.

truth, beauty and goodness. "I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one cometh to the Father, except through me."

#### CHRIST AND THE INWARD LIGHT.

It is, perhaps, a cause of perplexity to some of us that the saints of the seventeenth century so constantly spoke of the Light in their souls as "Christ." We ask how can a man who lived and died many centuries ago be the same as the Inward Light that brings certainty to the souls of men to-day? Well, we must remember that these men were not, for the most part, philosophic thinkers, and some of our difficulties never occurred to them. Moreover, they had in the back of their minds the thought of the Fourth Gospel (which is also hidden in the Epistles of Paul, though never worked out there), that "Christ" meant much more than the human life of Jesus of Nazareth. He did not begin to be when Jesus was born, nor pass away from the earth when Jesus died. All the doctrine of the Christian Church about the Person of Christ was built up on the Johannine thought that in Jesus of Nazareth was incarnated the Eternal "Logos," or "Word," which in all ages had been the "life" and "light" of men.

"Jesus," wrote Origen in the third century, "though He has only now for worthy reasons fulfilled the Divine plan of His incarnation, has at all times been doing good to the human race. For no noble deed among men has ever been done without the Divine Logos visiting the souls of [men]."\*

Still earlier, Irenæus had written of Christ as gathering up or "recapitulating" in Himself all that was of worth in manhood, all that constituted man's true nature. The deep mystery of the Incarnation is too large a subject to be more than touched on here;

\* Origen, *adv. Celsum*, vi. 78 ff.

but we cannot understand the language of the early Quakers without bearing it in mind. The essential thought that lay behind the doctrine of the "Logos" (whether they understood it or not) is that God and man are not so completely separated as we often think: that they have *something in common*: that God has that in Him which can be adequately expressed in a perfect human life, and that man at his best has that in him which can be an adequate expression of God.

Moreover, belief in the Resurrection of Christ carries with it the thought of His return to men in spiritual presence as "the Comforter," the Holy Spirit. We may perhaps venture to think of the Holy Spirit as the Logos in *personal* presence, because now recognised as the living presence of Christ Himself. Thus, for those who can accept the Incarnation and the Resurrection, the word "Christ" may, without confusion of thought, be used alike for Jesus of Nazareth, the perfect Man who revealed the character of God, and for the Divine Light in the souls of men, in which He perfectly lived.

#### REASON AND CONSCIENCE.

A few words seem to be needed here as to the relation of the "Inward Light" to human Reason and Conscience. It is well to recognise that the word "Reason," like many more, is used in different senses. Sometimes it means the power in man by which he recognises anything as *true*, whether in the domain of fact or in that of beauty or worth; and in this sense it may be regarded as one of the operations of the Inward Light. For we have come to understand something that was hardly appreciated by most of the early Friends: that every *true* and *worthy* thought is a repetition of the Divine thought, that it is not man's only but God's: so that right Reason within

us is the working of His Spirit and not merely our own. But in another sense the word Reason stands for the purely intellectual process of *reasoning*—as when we infer that the tides are caused by the attraction of the moon, or that the angles of every triangle are equal to two right angles. And this intellectual process, while it certainly, when rightly conducted, gives us truth in relation to the outward world, can never yield up to us the highest and most important truth of all. It brings us no sense of beauty or final worth, no insight into goodness, no conviction of personal character, no inward revelation of God. As Bergson has powerfully shown, it stands in contrast with the “intuition” whereby we may gain some first-hand acquaintance with the inner reality of the universe. This distinction should be borne in mind when we read in Quaker writings that the Light of God within us must not be confused with human Reason, or that it is not “natural” to man as man.\*

So again with regard to Conscience. That is another word that has various meanings. Sometimes it stands for the perception of the difference between right and wrong, and the conviction that it is always our duty to follow the right and avoid the wrong,

\* There is a serious weakness in the presentation of the Inward Light in the writings of the Friends, owing to the too rigid distinction which they made between the human and the Divine, between the “natural” and the “supernatural.” What is said above is not meant to imply that intellectual processes, when properly conducted, have nothing of the Divine in them. God is truth, and all true knowledge is in some degree a reflection of His thoughts. What is meant is that the intellect appears to have been given us (through Evolution) for bringing us into right relations with the outward (or phenomenal) universe, and that it cannot by itself give us insight into the spiritual realities that lie “behind the veil.” For criticism of the early Quaker statements on the subject see my *Authority and the Light Within*, Chapter IX; also R. M. Jores, *Social Law in the Spiritual World*, chapter on “The Test of Spiritual Guidance”; and W. C. Braithwaite, *Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience*, § III.



wherever this may lead us. In this sense it is another operation of the Inward Light. But it also stands

the belief that *some particular* kinds of action are right and others wrong: as that we ought not to steal or kill, to hold slaves, to have more than one wife, to do business on Sunday, and so forth. In this sense it is largely the product of our education and social surroundings; and what is thought right by some people in one country may be thought wrong by others of another race or nation. The patriarchs in the Old Testament had little if any conscience against polygamy, or holding slaves, or killing their enemies of another nation. And to make "conscience" *in this sense* the Voice of God within us is to lay ourselves open to the objection that, if it appears that God tells one set of people to do things that He forbids others to do, it is very doubtful whether He speaks to men at all. •

The answer to this objection is to be found by observing the process in history whereby the human conscience has been gradually educated to a truer standard of right and wrong. Just as there is a true standard of beauty, though a child may prefer brilliant colours and crude forms to a real work of art, so there is a true order of morals, to which the human race is gradually rising. How did people find out, for example, that slavery is wrong? Mainly because some one person, like John Woolman, or some few people, rose above the common standard of their day—because the Inward Light convinced them that what was commonly held to be right was not really so. The only reason why their views prevailed was that, when once it was pointed out, others began to see it too—the Inward Light in them convinced them also that it was wrong to use other people simply as means for their own advantage: that every person, whether black or white, ought to be regarded as an

end in himself and not merely as a means. Thus the Light of God in men educated their conscience in the matter of Slavery; and we believe it will, if they faithfully follow it, do the same in regard to War, and to the manifold evils of our social and industrial conditions.

It is, I hope, quite clear from what has been said above that faith in the Inward Light did not mean that everyone must do that which was right in his own eyes, and that there was no common moral standard. The Light was the Light of *Christ*, who was reproducing His own Spirit and way of life in His followers. "Fox," says Herbert G. Wood, "did not stand merely or chiefly for the general principle of the Inner Light; he bore witness to the Inner Light as expressed in clear moral judgments and in a developing moral experience."\*

#### UNIVERSALITY OF THE LIGHT.

Now we can see why the Early Friends so constantly insisted that the Light of Christ was not partial, but was given in measure to all men. This was one of their chief contentions, and one of the principal reasons why they were so bitterly persecuted by the "orthodox" people of their time. Robert Barclay, in the *Apology* (1676), sums up the whole of the earlier Quaker teaching in these words:

"Glory to God for ever! who hath chosen us as first-fruits to himself in this day, wherein he is arisen to plead with the nations; and therefore hath sent us forth to preach this everlasting gospel unto all: Christ nigh to all, the light in all, the seed sown in the hearts of all, that men may come and apply their minds to it."†

\* *George Fox*, pp. 114-115. See also a valuable pamphlet *Friends and the Inner Light*, by A. Neave Brayshaw.

† Barclay, *Apology*, Prop. VI., "Universal and Saving Light," § 24.

It is unnecessary to labour the point, inasmuch as thoughtful Christian people generally, in the present day, gladly admit this truth. Thus a committee of Anglicans and Free-Churchmen, recently appointed to draw up a statement of points of agreement between them, for the proposed "World Conference on Faith and Order," declared the belief that "There is some knowledge of God to be found among all races of men, and some measure of divine grace and help is present to all." The far-reaching character of this conviction, the way in which it revolutionises men's thoughts of their relations to other people, breaking down all the divisions that men have made between races, classes, and religions, will I hope appear in the sequel.

#### WHERE DOES ATONEMENT COME IN ?

The heaviest of the charges brought against the early Quakers was that by their doctrine that Christ was in every man they made salvation needless—that they left no place for Atonement, Conversion, the New Birth, and so swept away the very essentials of the Christian religion. Their answer was that it was a very different thing to *have* the Light present in the soul from what it was to *follow* and *obey* it. They knew by experience that it was quite possible to have the Light and yet to disregard it and walk in darkness. They were never tired of contrasting their experience, after the Light had come to them and after they had consciously entered into it, with that which they had known when they were either unaware of its presence or were living in opposition to it.

In other words, they knew in their own lives, and they saw in the human world about them, the fact of Sin. They understood what Jesus meant when He said that it is only when the eye is "single" that

the whole body is full of light ; and they knew that in man's " natural " state the eye is not " single," but is darkened by sin or self-will. For them the fundamental necessity was that man should be turned round from the pathway of sin, where his vision was obscured, into the path of " walking in the Light." And they were sure that some mightier power than his own will was needed to make this revolution in a man's life.

That was essentially what Atonement meant to the early Friends. It was the Reconciliation of man to God—no mere " transaction " outside himself, no fictitious " imputing " of a righteousness that was not real. God had given Himself to men, in the life and above all in the death of Jesus Christ, that He might draw all men to Himself, changing man's will from the pursuit of sin to the pursuit of holiness by the dynamic of sacrificial love. Most of them were not theologians, and they rarely discussed the theory ; what they were after was the reality. Atonement for them was an *inward* work, a real change in man, or it was nothing.\*

The Reconciliation of man to God, the winning of his will by sacrificial love, carries with it the opening of his inward eyes to *see* that of which he was but dimly conscious, or not conscious at all. " Blessed are the pure in heart," said Jesus, " for they shall see God." And so we rightly distinguish between the Inward Light on the one hand as the name for a gift which all men in some measure share, which they may either use or disregard ; and, on the other, as the clear Light that to the repentant and willing child reveals God as his own Father in the face of Jesus Christ. It is those whose nature is renewed by the Spirit of the Crucified

\* Compare Clement of Rome, *Epistle to the Corinthians* (end of first Century), ch. 7: " Let us fix our eyes on the blood of Christ, and understand how precious it is unto His Father, because being shed for our salvation it won for the whole world the grace of repentance."

who come into full possession of their powers of spiritual vision. The early Friends spoke not only of the "Light" in men but of the "Seed." They knew the difference between the diffused light of dawn and the clear shining of the risen Sun; between the seed with its hidden possibilities and the rich beauty of the opened flower.

#### QUAKERISM AND ORTHODOXY.

This seems to be the best point at which to touch on the relations of the Quaker faith to the doctrines of the Church which are generally considered orthodox. It is apparent, from what has been already said, that the Friends never thought of questioning the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the Divinity of Christ, His Incarnation, or the reality of His Atonement as the means of reconciling man to God. They would not call the Bible "the Word of God," because for them the "Word" was the Logos or Divine Spirit that spoke direct to the soul of man and had inspired the Scriptures; and they refused to regard the latter as the *final* authority, because they were sure that, unless a man's soul was enlightened by the same Spirit, the Scriptures could not be understood or rightly used. They objected to the formula of the "Three Persons of the Trinity," because they could find in the New Testament no mention of either Trinity or Persons. The orthodox dogma appeared to them a "notion," a piece of intellectual speculation which did not find a witness in their experience, and for which therefore they had no use.

When, as was often the case, they were charged with "heresy," they put out statements showing what they believed to be their fundamental orthodoxy.\* What

\* For instance, George Fox's Epistle to the Governor of Barbadoes (1671), and the long declaration issued by London Yearly Meeting in connection with the Keith controversy in 1693.

chiefly distinguished their theological position from that of most of the other Christian bodies of their time was their resolute insistence that it was not orthodoxy, but life, that made a person a Christian. William Penn wrote, in words that they would all have accepted :

“ It is not opinion, or speculation, or notions of what is true ; or assent to, or the subscription of, articles or propositions, though never so soundly worded, that makes a man a true believer or a true Christian. But it is conformity of mind and practice to the will of God, in all holiness of conversation, according to the dictates of the divine principle of light and life in the soul, which denotes a person truly a child of God.”\*

In other words, Christianity was for them essentially an experience of the Light of Christ in the soul, and a way of life based on that experience. This was the primary thing, and correctness of belief, though not unimportant, fell into the second place. They certainly did not mean that there was no common standard of true belief, any more than that there was no common standard of right action. What I think they did mean, if I may express it in my own way, is that it is vain to attempt to safeguard the stronghold of Christian faith by a wire entanglement of human creeds. They were prepared to trust to Christian experience as the real safeguard against error. They believed that those who were really following the Light of Christ would (by a kind of instinct) accept ideas that nourished His life in the soul, and reject those that did not ; and that so, if all the emphasis were laid on loyalty to Christ, correctness of belief would largely take care of itself.

\* *A Key, etc.* (1692). For a criticism of the early Quaker attempts to state a doctrine of the Person of Christ, see my Swarthmore Lecture, *The Historic and the Inward Christ* (1914), Sections III.-VII.

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

Nothing is more striking, in the records of the Friends, than their conviction that the Inward Light revealed to them not only the reality of God, but His will for them in detail. Just as the Apostles believed themselves to be guided by the Spirit of their risen Lord, where to go and what to do (Acts xiii. 2-4, xvi. 6, 7), so it was with the early Quakers. God had become to them such a reality that they expected, and received, the experience that His Light would shine on the path of daily duty, and show them where it led. In this they were not, of course, alone; all true Christians doubtless believe (in greater or less degree) in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But certainly the belief in the Inward Light carried with it a stronger faith in guidance, both individual and corporate, than has been customary among Christians; and this had no small share in moulding the Quaker character. It applies, as we shall see later, more especially to the work of the Ministry and other forms of spiritual service; but the true Friend is taught to look for it, and to endeavour to follow it, in all the affairs of life. It is not that "supernatural" manifestations are normally expected, in the way of visions or audible voices or impressive "monitions"; though such experiences occur to some. Rather, it is to be sought in the enlightening of the reason and conscience, and in the clearing of the judgment so that the facts that *ought* to influence a decision are clearly perceived and given their due weight. The Inward Light is experienced as, in John Woolman's phrase, "the spirit of pure wisdom"; the Spirit guides by raising a man's personality to higher powers of insight and sound judgment. As W. C. Braithwaite says:

"The Divine Personality with whom our spirits have communion reveals Himself along the common

ways of life,\* and with the help of the natural faculties of man.”\*

#### OTHER QUAKER “PECULIARITIES.”

It is from the belief in, and experience of, the Inward Light that there follow the particular ways and tenets that have distinguished the Society of Friends. This we shall see more in detail in the following chapters. Whether we look at Worship and Ministry, the disuse of outward Sacraments, the refusal to take judicial Oaths, the conviction that War is sinful, the hatred of oppression and injustice in human relations, or Quaker methods of Church Government—in every case the underlying cause of the practices that specially mark the Friends is to be found ultimately in their assurance of the direct and personal relation of every human soul to God, and of the need for absolute sincerity and reality if His light is to shine unobscured.

\* *Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience*, p. 108. It should be added that the process by which a good man decides on his course of action is never a purely intellectual one. Intellect may, in some measure, enable him to judge whether a particular line of action will or will not promote the end he has in view; but for deciding the much more vital question whether that end is a *worthy* one he needs some kind of Inward Light. (See above, pp. 34, 39).



## CHAPTER III

### WORSHIP AND MINISTRY

"All Friends, everywhere, keep your meetings waiting in the light, which doth come from the Lord Jesus Christ; so will you receive power from Him, and have the refreshing springs of life opened to your souls, and be kept sensible of the tender mercies of the Lord. And know one another in the life, and in the power, which comes from the Lord Jesus Christ."—GEORGE FOX.

WHY did George Fox and his friends adopt methods of conducting the public worship of God that ran counter to the almost universal practice of the Christian Church from the second century onwards? They threw aside all human leadership, all set forms of service. They met together in silence, and gave liberty to any of their company, whether man or woman, to offer words of prayer or testimony or exhortation, if led by the Spirit so to do. The cause of this great venture was undoubtedly their rediscovery of the Inward Light—of the direct and immediate access of every sincere and seeking soul to the Source of all life and power. And, whether or not it can be claimed that the venture was justified by its fruits, it remains still the most distinctive and highly cherished "peculiarity" of the Society of Friends.

#### THE MEANING OF WORSHIP.

The root of Worship, in all ages and in all religions, has been the natural and spontaneous desire of man to offer something to his God—something that he supposes God will appreciate and accept. Man has wished to bring of his best—to offer to God that which has cost him something. Hence the almost universal practice of *sacrifice*—of human sacrifice in early and barbarous

days ; of the offering of animals when the Inward Light had quickened men's consciences to perceive that human sacrifice was displeasing to God. The beautiful story of Abraham's offering of Isaac, forbidden (in its gross outward form) by a voice from heaven, marks an important stage in the progress of Divine revelation to man—of the enlightening of his conscience by the Light of God. And the days came when inspired prophets and psalmists discovered, by a further stage of revelation, that even animal sacrifices were not really what God required, but that He desired the inward and hidden sacrifice of the heart and will of man.

“ Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in ;  
 Mine ears hast thou opened ;  
 Burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.  
 Then said I, Lo, I am come ;  
 I delight to do Thy will, O my God.”—(Psalm xl. 6-8).

But worship, from the earliest times, was felt to be not so much an individual as a *corporate* approach and offering to God. The priests offered their sacrifices, among heathen and Jews alike, not for themselves but on behalf of the people collectively. When the Jews went into exile, and their holy place was destroyed, the temple sacrifices were necessarily suspended, and a substitute was found in the worship of the Synagogue. After their return, the two methods were carried on side by side. The Sadducees were mainly concerned with the former ; the Pharisees (who succeeded to the prophetic movement but lacked its inspiration), with the latter. It was in the Synagogue that devout Jews mainly found the satisfaction of their need of worship ; and the earliest Christian assemblies clearly took over its general methods. In all probability it was mainly the need of preserving order and edification in public worship, after the fresh inspiration of the early Christian converts had largely

passed away, that led to the adoption of a fixed liturgy or form of "service," and to the restriction of the power to conduct it to a special class of leaders, whether bishops, presbyters or deacons. But the process of separation between clergy and laity was doubtless hastened by the tendency to facilitate the spread of the new religion by assimilating its practices in some degree to those with which the converts, whether they had been Jews or pagans, were already familiar; and so there was set up a *priesthood*. In the Eucharist was found the equivalent for sacrifice, and the Lord's table became an "altar."

The Reformers for the most part threw aside priestly and sacrificial ideas and practices; but they retained, with rare exceptions in the case of a few extremists, the distinction between clergy and laity, and a stated order of service. In the Established Church of England the Acts of Uniformity made the use of the Prayer Book order compulsory; among the Presbyterians and Independents and Baptists there was more freedom. But hardly any of them ventured to return to the complete "liberty of prophesying" which Paul shows in 1 Cor. xiv. to have characterized the primitive Church.

### THE QUAKER METHOD OF WORSHIP.

It was no slavish imitation of the practices of the Corinthian Church that led George Fox and his friends to adopt a new method of public worship. There is no evidence, I think, that the Corinthians practised silent waiting; possibly it would have been better for them if they had. Before Fox's time, however, it had been used by Henry Nicholas, the founder of the "Family of Love";\* and in his own day it was being practised by some of the "Seekers" who found

\* *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 23.

in him the prophet they were looking for. William Penn writes :

" They sometimes met together, not formally to pray or preach, at appointed times and places, in their own will, as in times past they were accustomed to do ; but waited together in silence, and as anything rose in any one of their minds that they thought savoured of a Divine spring, so they sometimes spoke."\*

George Fox had special reasons of his own for adopting a similar course. He records how, in his early struggles after light and truth, it was " opened " to him " that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ " ; and he saw that this " struck at the priest's ministry." He had not been happy in his intercourse with the " priests " to whom he had gone for advice and help in his distress. One told him to take tobacco and sing psalms. Another, whom he went seven miles to call on, he found " like an empty hollow cask." Another flew into a rage, " as if his house had been on fire," when the young man in his nervousness accidentally trod on his flower-bed. And so when at last he, a simple layman, found the Light for himself, he concluded not only that priestly mediation was an error, but that *any* Christian might be called to minister to others of that which God had given him. The real ministry, he thought, must be that which was directly inspired by the Spirit, not sermons which a man concocted out of his own head,† or prayers which he read from a book.

Moreover, the " children of the Light," as they met together, were abundantly conscious of the presence

\* Preface to Fox's *Journal* (Bicentenary edition), p. xxv.

† We may recognise the sincerity of his protest against the ordinary sermonising of his day without concluding, as the early Quakers were too prone to do, that no carefully prepared sermon can contain a living message from God. Fox himself was accustomed to use all his powers of mind in preparing written addresses to Friends and others.

of Another among them, to whom they "freely surrendered the control and guidance of their gatherings. They felt that One alone was their Master, and that they all were brethren; they could not therefore look to any human leader to conduct their worship and tell them what to do. From the first, after he came out as a preacher of the Light, Fox refused to speak until he was sure of his message; and then he found that it went home with power. Among the moors, near Pickering in Yorkshire, he tells us (1651): "I sat on a haystack, and spoke nothing for some hours; for I was to famish them from words." The people waited restlessly, wondering when he would begin. "At last I was moved of the Lord to speak; and they were all reached by the Lord's power and word of life, and there was a general conviction among them."\* In a company of Seekers, numbering several hundreds, at Preston Patrick Chapel in Westmorland (1652), Fox sat in silence for half-an-hour, while the usual preacher, Francis Howgill, tried several times to speak, but in vain. At last Fox stood up "in the mighty power of God," and "most of the auditory were convinced of the truth that very day."† This was one of the meetings in the "crowded fortnight that formed the creative moment in the history of Quakerism." It was as the "publishers of truth" waited for the power to come, and the right message to be given, that great things were wrought through their ministry.

Further, they felt that "walking in the Light" meant *reality* in all things, and most of all in the approach to God in public worship. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Such worship, they were convinced, could not be a *performance* devised by man and gone

\* Cambridge Journal, Vol. I., p. 28.

† Account by Thomas Camm, quoted in *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 85.

through in man's own will and way. Since Christ Himself was their leader, they must wait in silence that He might have *opportunity* to direct them. An arranged order of service, they thought, denied liberty to the Spirit of God. Prayer from a book, however dignified and beautiful the words, might easily become unreal if it did not truly express the experience and the actual desires of those who used it. "*I love to feel where words come from*": this was an expression once used to John Woolman by an Indian, who only partially understood his language. Words that would really help the worship of God must be quickened words, drawn forth by the Spirit out of the deep wells of a living experience.

Silence, in the Quaker ideal of worship, is therefore not an end in itself but a means to an end. The real end of Christian worship is that a company of people should offer themselves to God in such true self-surrender that He can use them as He will; and silence is believed to facilitate the offering and to remove the barriers that restrict the Divine liberty. It is not negative but positive: not a denial that true worship may be known in other ways, but an affirmation that it is known pre-eminently in this way. It affirms our assurance that the presence of Christ among His people is *real*: so real that they can trust Him to direct and control their gatherings. It is a direct outcome of the conviction and experience of the Inward Light.

### THE POWER OF SILENCE.

The practice of gathering in silence has been so little used by Christians that many still regard it with wonder, as a kind of "freak." To many, who make brief trial of it, the silence is irksome; to some even terrifying in its inward strain. In the act of worship people want to forget themselves; but silence seems to throw them back upon themselves in a way they can hardly bear.

Others ask, why spend time in musing when there is so much that needs to be done? And some cannot understand why, if worship is to be in silence, people should come together at all. Could not silent worship be better practised in the secret chamber, or by the fireside, or even in the open air?

It is good to be able to answer these and other objections in the words of one who is not a Quaker, but who has discovered for himself, and has succeeded in making known to others, the secret of silent worship. I need not apologize for quoting at some length from Mr. Cyril Hephner, an Anglican clergyman, whose answers appear to me both sound and strong, and better than anything I could write. The true silence, he asserts, is not passive but intensely active.

"For us there awaits, if we will be still and listen for it, the consciousness of God, the hearing of the voice of the Eternal Word; or, if you would rather so speak, the seeing of the Light which comes from no other source than Him who is the Light of the World. This stillness which has the promise of the knowledge of God is no dreamy musing, no *dolce far niente* of the soul. It is the silence that the soul demands in order that it may be free and undisturbed to fasten, by a strenuous act of the will, its whole and undivided attention upon God, and God alone. It is a stillness as alert and active as a sentry upon guard, straining ear and eye through the darkness to catch the first and faintest sign of movement. What is more active than the attitude of such a listener? . . . We forgo even our entreaties, and are content to be listeners rather than speakers. And well we may, for man is not heard for his much speaking. Indeed, if prayer be communion with God, it would be strange were we to leave no space for God to speak."\*

\* *The Fruits of Silence*, pp. 11-13.

Again, in answer to the objection that silent worship could equally well, or better, be enjoyed in solitude, he says :

" The Silence that I write of is a corporate silence. It is a *Fellowship* of Silence, and silence in fellowship is the easiest of all silences. In it we help one another. As we seek God together, the Divine Life indwelling each separate soul overflows our individual separateness, and reaching forth unites soul with soul in the unity of the One Spirit. The help of fellowship is not dependent upon speech. It is thoroughly available in the Silence. Nor are words the only channels by which personality radiates its influence. Men who live in the atmosphere of God carry it with them everywhere. They communicate it in a measure to others. It is certain that those who come together for the express purpose of surrendering themselves to the simple waiting upon God will bring with them to the common Silence great help for each other. The prayer of two or three in fellowship is a greater thing than the prayer of the same persons in isolation, and as such has our Lord's express promise of power and reward."\*

Speaking for myself, as one who knows abundantly the difficulty of prayer and worship, I can truthfully say that it is far easier in the fellowship of kindred souls than in solitude. And modern psychology has supplied us with the means of understanding why this should be so. We know now that our mysterious personalities are not nearly so widely sundered as our separate consciousnesses would lead us to suppose, but that in the depths of our subconscious being our personalities blend together and influence each other. When a company of people sit down together, resolutely

\* *The Fruits of Silence*, pp. 17, 18. We may remember that it was when the disciples were gathered "with one accord" and "in one place" (Acts i. 14, ii. 1, 46) that the Holy Spirit came upon them.



striving to seek after God in common, there is opportunity for this blending of personalities, and for the flowing through them of the tides of His life which is not afforded in the same degree when all are engaged in attending to outward words. Mr. Percy Dearmer, another Anglican clergyman, writes:

"In their very manner of worship, the Quakers forestalled the discoveries of the new Psychology. And that silent concentration of theirs exactly discovered and met the central weakness of Protestantism, which is still with us—the sacerdotalism that has led men to think that the rays of God's light can only reach the human heart through the distorted medium of a human preacher."\*

#### THE IDEAL MEETING FOR WORSHIP.

And this may suggest that the *compulsory* Silence which is what our Anglican friends mainly have in view is not our ideal. We need silence; but we need a silence that is free to be broken by words of prayer and vocal ministry when these are Divinely prompted. We desire "freedom of prophesying," that it may not be left for one preacher, out of the narrow resources of his own experience, or out of a prepared liturgy, to present to God, and to speak to, the many spiritual needs of those who are present; but that freedom may be given for one to speak to the needs of some, and another to those of others. In the silence, where the company are bound together in fellowship, there is liberty for the Divine Spirit, *acting through the*

\* *The Fellowship of Silence*, p. 175. I am aware that the personal experience alluded to above is not universal. Some of my friends tell me they find distractions in prayer, which most of us know to our deep humiliation, increased and not lessened by the presence of other people. But I believe that the earnest endeavour to lay hold of the spiritual needs of others, and to bring them with our own to God, will never be unrewarded, even when consciousness of His "grace" is but faint and dim.

*fellowship*, to draw forth the words that are needed. As Whittier says, we

“ Welcome the silence all unbroken,  
Nor less the words in fitness spoken.”\*

This has always been the Quaker ideal of worship. Barclay wrote, of the meetings of Friends in the seventeenth century :

“ God is not wanting, to move in His children to bring forth words of exhortation or prayer, when it is needful ; so that, of the many gatherings and meetings of such as are convinced of the truth, there is scarce any in which God raiseth not up some or other to minister to his brethren ; and there are few meetings that are altogether silent.”†

To use the late Thomas Hodgkin's beautiful simile :

— “ In my conception of the matter, Silent Worship is a beautiful still lake. It is studded with lovely islands, the vocal utterances of members of the congregation. In these islands grow the harvests of spiritual good : in them the forests of praise are waving : from them the fountains of prayer rise on high : but all are surrounded by the fair still water, and that water reflects in its surface the pure blue of the Eternal Heavens above.”‡

That this is not an unattainable ideal, many of us can testify. It might be assumed that the ideal meeting for worship would consist entirely of Christian disciples who were all “ of one accord ” in the deep desire to present themselves to God and to help one another in the spiritual life. And yet it is clear that normally it cannot be so—and, indeed, *ought* not to be so—as long as sin and earthliness remain in the

\* “ The Meeting.”

† *Apology*, Prop. XI., “ Of Worship,” § ix.

‡ *The Fellowship of Silence*, pp. 89, 90.

world. The true meeting for worship will be gathering in, Sunday by Sunday, many sorts of human souls, not all of whom are yet in the experience of deep communion with God. It will not be a "happy family" of devout and mystical people, where a stranger to the inner life feels ill at ease. Many of those present will be people living busy lives, who need all the help their brethren can give them to lay aside their daily cares, or at least to see them in their true relation to the great purpose of life as a whole, that they may "take the common things of life and walk truly among them." Some may be overburdened with care and trouble ; some in the coils of temptation which they know not how to overcome ; some may be seeking God but in sore perplexity of thought. Some have restless minds that wander over wide fields and will not settle. Some are children who have not learnt to control their thoughts. Some, it may be, are earthly-minded, and have as yet but a fitful interest in the things of the Spirit. Some may be even indifferent to God, and have gathered mainly to see their friends.

Such are some of the many-sided human needs that ought to be in our minds as we assemble together. We must not assume that *all* the company are in deadly earnest, or are capable of the worship that is in spirit and in truth ; and preaching that is based on this assumption very often does not ring true. There ought to be preaching that will meet some at least of these varying needs : that will arouse the indifferent, and call the people into the Kingdom of God through repentance, self-surrender, and trust in Christ. It is true that some who have not yet found God for themselves may be better aroused by being made aware that *others* are finding their souls fed, rather than by being directly preached to ; but they will not be helped by being forgotten and ignored. We need our Master's outreaching love for the "lost" souls—

lost as yet to their own better nature, but never lost to Him. We need to be shaken out of our narrow self-satisfaction by the passion of the Cross. We need to be awakened to the sorrows of the great world that is so largely "separated from the Divine harmony," and kindled to take our share in the work of transforming it into the Kingdom of Love.

### VOCAL PRAYER AND PRAISE.

It follows, then, that there ought to be living words of "prophecy" and teaching—of "speaking unto men edification and comfort and consolation." And even more we need the words of spoken prayer and praise, that we may be helped collectively to present our many-sided needs to God, and collectively to express our sense of what He is to us. Such prayer need not be long or "eloquent"; but if it is from the true source it will not lack in dignity and force. It will not be such as one man may call for from another by announcing that someone "will now lead us in prayer"; for though he may draw forth words he cannot command the reality. True prayer spoken in the congregation can only be such as is called forth by the present operation of the Spirit who "maketh intercession in us."\* It will be prayer "in the name of Christ": that is, such prayer as He Himself might have uttered, and which is sure of answer because it is the expression of desires begotten in us by His own Spirit.

Very noteworthy is the tribute which William Penn gives to the power of George Fox in vocal prayer.

"But above all he excelled in prayer. The inwardness and weight of his spirit, the reverence and solemnity of his address and behaviour, *and the fewness and*

\* In Romans viii. 26 the Greek word *ὑπερβύχωνται* means "comes in on our behalf": that is, comes *into us*, begetting inexpressible desires, "groanings that cannot be uttered."

*fulness of his words*, have often struck even strangers with admiration, as they used to reach others with consolation. The most awful, living, reverent frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say, was his in prayer. And, truly, it was a testimony he knew and lived nearer to the Lord than other men; for they that know Him, most will see most reason to approach Him with reverence and fear.”\*

### THE SINGING OF HYMNS.

The absence of singing in our meetings for worship often seems to strangers an unaccountable omission. And indeed we must acknowledge that we do lose something that draws a congregation into a unity, and enables all to join in a collective utterance of praise and prayer. The reasons for its discontinuance are mainly two: first, the fear of *unreality*, if people take upon their lips, it may be without much thought, solemn words of Christian experience which they cannot truthfully make their own; and second the difficulty that, if singing is to be *well done*, it needs so much preparation that it is in danger of becoming a performance. Many of us must have been painfully impressed, at times, with an apparent want of reality and reverence in the choir, whether at church or chapel; and we have heard suggestions that a choir is not always a place where Christian humility is most abundantly manifested. The early Quaker ideal seems to have been to put singing on exactly the same footing as preaching or vocal prayer: that is, to leave it open for members of the congregation to do as they felt they were led by the Spirit. Barclay says:

“We confess this [singing] to be part of God’s worship, when it proceeds from a true sense of God’s love in the heart, and arises from the divine influence

\* Preface to Fox’s *Journal*, p. xlvii.

of the Spirit, which leads souls to breathe forth either a sweet harmony or words suitable to the present conditions. . . . But as for the formal customary way of singing, it hath no foundation in scripture nor any ground in true Christianity."\*

What he seems to have had in mind was singing *by individuals*; but this never became common and is now almost unknown.

At Mission Meetings and Fellowship Meetings, which are held in many places, especially on Sunday evenings, in ways rather different from Meetings for Worship, —often with the desire to help those who are but little accustomed to silence—congregational singing is quite usual; but most of us do not desire to have it introduced at our Sunday morning gatherings.

## “ DIVINE GUIDANCE IN MINISTRY.

The question is often asked, What do Friends mean by “the moving of the Spirit” as the source of the right kind of vocal ministry; and, if they think that our ministers are directly inspired by God, why do the utterances in our meetings show so few evidences of this? And is it reasonable to look for a special sort of guidance, within the four walls of a meeting-house, which we do not expect elsewhere? In other departments of life, as in teaching or preparing a lecture, we *plan ahead*, using our best powers of mind that we may act effectively. Why should it be any different in regard to preaching?

To answer these questions fully would take much more than our available space. Here I can only offer a few suggestions. In the first place, it is quite certain that the true Christian must look for Divine guidance in the *whole* of his life. If he is going his own way six days in the week, he will certainly not be miracu-

\* *Apology*, Prop. XI.; § xxvi.

lously guided on the seventh. The experience of Guidance is a matter of spiritual habit : " My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me."

But there is a real difference between preaching and teaching or lecturing ; and there is room and need for a higher kind of guidance. The object of teaching and lecturing is mainly to develop and inform the *mind* ; that of preaching is to convert and feed the soul. Its appeal is to the deepest elements in our personality : it searches a dim mysterious region where the speaker needs a better light than his reason can give him, even when this is enlightened by the Spirit, as it will be if he is truly living the Christian life. We find that in the medium of a waiting *silence*, where he seeks earnestly to God for help to know what he ought to do, he is brought (sub-consciously it may be) into such living touch with other souls that he can, in some measure, discover what is wanted. And, in spite of all weaknesses and mistakes, which we freely acknowledge we have experience of a *harmony* in our gatherings, when at their best, and a ministry of help and healing such as we rarely find elsewhere. We do not rule out all use of reason and intellectual preparation, or imagine that guidance in ministry is something wholly "supernatural." The Divine order of the universe is that the higher element does not refuse the lower, but takes it up, transforms and uses it—just as Life expresses itself through Matter. Human wisdom is not to be rejected, but to be taken up, enlightened, and used. The Spirit of God does not save us the trouble of thinking for ourselves.

As regards intellectual preparation, those who have the good of a meeting at heart should be daily on the look-out for helpful thoughts, which may be used when the right time has come, and which should be made as correct and clear and orderly as possible. They should be diligent in the study not only of

the Bible, but, as opportunity offers, of the great spiritual teachers of every age, especially the poets. But to all this—which Barclay rather contemptuously calls “conned and gathered stuff”—a Friend should sit *loosely*, waiting for light to arise. It is disastrous to a meeting when he goes determined, “for the relief of his own mind,” to inflict it on his brethren, come what may. Nor should such “prepared” addresses crowd out the simpler and briefer offerings of humble souls who feel the call to give a word of quiet testimony or prayer; for these short utterances, even when—and perhaps *especially* when—offered with diffidence and hesitation, may do more for the help of the meeting than any others.

There is, I believe, no rule to be laid down in words as to what it is that constitutes right Guidance in ministry. The Spirit speaks to us in many ways.

“To some it seems that God speaks, as it were, by the earthquake and the whirlwind; to others it is in a very still small voice. There are strong impulses which make the heart beat and the body tremble; there are, on the other hand, faint whispers which we need to be on the alert to hear. Both may be equally the voice of the true Shepherd, calling us to follow His leading.”\*

I am aware that this is not the way in which Spiritual Guidance was written of among Friends in the seventeenth century, and later; but I believe it to be true to our present-day experience. The old hard line between the “natural” and the “supernatural” we can no longer draw. The Divine works normally through the human and not apart from it. Particularly we are learning that right guidance comes from

\* *Christian Discipline*, Part II., p. 38. For some hints as to the nature of Spiritual Guidance in the general affairs of life, see above, p. 46.



God *through the fellowship* of gathered souls, and that we shall rarely find it except as we make ourselves part of the fellowship, and are bound into the harmony of the One Life that is flowing through it like the sap through the vine. And this means that the meeting affects the ministry as much as the ministry affects the meeting. It is in the sunny atmosphere of loving and waiting hearts that true and helpful ministry arises; where the company is cold and dead and critical, it is not strange that ministry is weak and guidance is hard to find. *All* the members have their responsibility for the right use of the gifts that have been given to each.

#### UNIVERSALITY OF CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD.

In other words, *all* the living members of a congregation are in the position of "priests": all have the priestly privilege of direct access to God and of responsibility for the souls of others. This is recognised even by our High-Church friends. "Priesthood," says Cyril Hephner, is "the birthright of every Christian, which is exercised by every true intercessor."\* And we believe that we are following the mind of the Spirit, and the practice of the early Church, when we base our organization wholly on a recognition of this truth. We believe in Apostolical Succession—but not, as someone has said, through the thin trickle of a line of Bishops, but through the broad river of the whole Christian Church. We give to every member the opportunity of developing the gifts that God has given him, of exercising the ministry to which he is called.

And not *he* only; we owe more than we can possibly express to the ministry of women. It is one of the tragedies of the Christian Church that—owing largely

\* *The Fruits of Silence*, p. 143.

to a misunderstanding of a single sentence written by Paul,\* obviously with no thought of excluding women from the service of "prophecy,"—it has, all through the centuries since it became an organized body, forbidden the exercise of half its gift of vocal ministry—possibly the "better half." With us man and woman stand equal before God, and both alike may be called by Him into the highest spiritual service. Both alike may be part of His "royal priesthood."

\* 1 Cor: xiv. 34. In xi. 5 he had given directions that if women engaged in "praying or prophesying" it should be with the head veiled.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SACRAMENTS

"There are not merely two or seven sacraments, but seventy times seven, for him whose heart seeks ever fellowship with his brothers and with the Father above him. . . . The error of the sacramentalist in the past has often rather been that he has confined the Divine presence and the Divine working to certain fixed channels and unchanging visible signs. We who hold that these good men have narrowed down the freedom of the inner life need to meet them not by denying the Divine presence where they see it, but by trying to see and to realise that presence ourselves more fully throughout all our lives." T. E. HARVEY, *A Wayfarer's Faith*, pp. 57, 62.

"There is a very minimum of symbol and cult in the teaching of Jesus—so little that the ancient world thought the Christians were atheists, because they had no temple, no sacrifice, no ritual, nothing that suggested religion in the ordinary sense of the word. We shall realise the difficulty of what Jesus was doing when we grasp that He meant people to see God independently of all their conventional aids." T. R. GLOVER, *The Jesus of History*, p. 73.

No practice of the Society of Friends is more unaccountable and even shocking to many of their fellow-Christians than their disuse of the so-called Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.\* It seems to be not only an audacious rejection of the unbroken tradition of the Church, but disobedience to the plain commands of our Lord. It should be understood from the outset that, if we are to make our "testimony" to the world on this point aright, we must do so not negatively but positively. That is, we must convince people that we do not *disbelieve* in Baptism and in

\* Mr. Cyril Hephner writes of the Quakers as "that inexplicable people who seem to exist in the world as a witness to the freedom of God to deal with the souls of men, neither by order nor rule, but solely as He listeth!" —(*Fruits of Silence*, p. 181.)

Communion, but show by our lives that we know the reality of these things without the use of the outward forms.

The dropping of these rites by the early Quakers was a direct outcome of their experience of the Inward Light. They seem to have been convinced from the first that those who knew the inward baptism and communion did not need the outward symbols.

"The claims of the Inward Light demanded a separation from all that was outward in religion, and left no place for a man-made ministry, or for reliance on the external features of Baptism and the Lord's Supper."\*

So early as 1656 Fox gives a long summary of the truths that he was "moved to open through the nation," which contains these statements:

"For He set up in the church one faith, which Christ was the author of; and one baptism, which was that of the Spirit, into the one body; and one Lord Jesus Christ, the spiritual baptizer, whom John said should come after him. . . . Eat the bread which comes down from above, which is not outward bread; and drink the cup of salvation which he gives in his kingdom, which is not outward wine."†

#### THE MEANING OF "SACRAMENTS."

The early Friends insisted that the word "Sacrament" is not a New Testament term. The Latin word *sacramentum* originally meant something consecrated or set apart; later it was used of the military oath by which a soldier dedicated himself to the service of the Emperor. Pliny, in his letter to Trajan (112 A.D.), describes the Christians in Bithynia as

\* *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 137.

† Fox's *Journal* (Bicentenary Edition), Vol. I., pp. 340, 342.

"coming together on a fixed day and binding themselves with an oath (*sacramento*) not to do wrong things." The word came to be used as the translation of the Greek *μυστήριον*, "mystery," which was employed in a very vague sense as a clue to any Divine or hidden reality. So late as the twelfth century, Hugo of St. Victor enumerates about thirty "sacraments" that had been recognised in the Church. The council of Trent (1547) limited the number to seven: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Marriage—a suggestion that was evidently influenced by the belief that seven was a sacred number.\* The Reformers confined the term to the two ceremonies that they believed to have been instituted by the Lord, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The only reason, so far as I am aware, of insistence on "two sacraments" is the idea that these in particular were instituted by Christ Himself.

The essential thought underlying the word Sacrament is that of *symbolism*. Anything in the outward world that truly represents or conveys a spiritual meaning—which is, in Augustine's words, "the visible form of an invisible grace"—may rightly be called a Sacrament. And in this sense we are all Sacramentalists, if we have any sense of poetry, or any appreciation of the worth and beauty of our Lord's parables. It is through the visible things of the outward world that the poet and the spiritual teacher, in proportion to his genius, finds a voice to speak of the things that are behind the veil.

#### THE PLACE OF CEREMONIAL OBSERVANCES.

But here we have to consider the word in its ordinary restricted sense, and to ask whether the Friends are right in discarding the outward ceremonies that

\* Hastings' *One Volume Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 810.

most Christians imagine to have been Divinely ordained as necessary for the life of the Church. To answer this question properly, we must I think take a rather extended view of the place of ceremonial observances in Jewish and Christian history.

I alluded above\* to the distinction and even opposition which we find among the Jews (parallels to which may be noticed in other religions), between the Priestly and the 'Prophetic movements. We do not always sufficiently recognise the vehemence with which the prophets, with few exceptions† (and in this they are followed by most of the psalmists), ignore and even disparage the practices of sacrifice and the other observances which to the priestly mind were all-important as affording access to God and to His grace.

Speaking broadly, the prophets and psalmists denounced as heathenism the prevalent belief that Jehovah would be pleased if His sacrifices were duly observed and multiplied. This is their constant "burden," from 1 Sam. xv. 22, "to obey is better than sacrifice," onwards. Amos (v. 21-24) says, as the mouthpiece of Jehovah, "I hate, I despise your feasts . . . neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts." Hosea (vi. 6) declares, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Isaiah (i. 11-17) has no words too strong to denounce the people's trust in sacrifices. "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me." Micah (vi. 6-8) says that the Lord will not be "pleased with thousands of rams," but that what He requires is that a man

\* Page 49. .

† Among the exceptions we may notice Is. lvi. 1-7, lviii. 13, 14 (observance of the Sabbath), and Mal. iii. 7-12 (tithes and offerings). Ps. li. 18, 19 is believed by many to be a priestly addition to the psalm, to correct the emphasis of verses 16, 17, "thou delightest not in sacrifice."

should "do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with God." Jeremiah (vii. 22, 23) goes so far as to say that Jehovah gave no commandment concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. And the later Isaiah (or some post-exilic prophet) declares that "the fast that I have chosen" is "to loose the bonds of wickedness" (Is. lvi. 5-8). These sayings are not exceptional; they contain the substance of the prophetic message as a whole, which taught that it is not ceremonies that Jehovah desires, but practical righteousness of heart and conduct.

The opposition between the ceremonial and the more spiritual sides of Jewish worship shows itself in the New Testament as the conflict between Sadducees and Pharisees. The Sadducees were the party of the priests, whose chief aims were to maintain the Temple and its sacrifices, which brought them office, influence, and income. The Pharisees were the inheritors of the prophetic tradition, and of the worship that centred in the Synagogue rather than in the Temple; but their religion, though still ethical, had become legal, hard, and cold. Both John the Baptist and Jesus identified themselves completely with the prophetic ideal. John practised Baptism as a symbol of repentance and forgiveness of sins and the entrance on a life of righteousness. He said nothing, so far as the Gospels tell us, about ceremonial or sacrifice, and denounced those who thought that their descent from Abraham ensured the favour of God (Matt. iii. 8, 9). But he knew that something more was needed. He could call men to repentance and to righteousness, but he could not give them the power to practise it. Hence he told of One who should come after him, baptizing with the Spirit.

Our Lord's work was precisely that of which John had felt the need. He announced the speedy coming (or the actual presence) of a "Kingdom" which only

those could enter whose righteousness should "exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees" (Matt. v. 20): who would bring forth the fruits of righteousness as naturally as a sound tree brings forth good fruit (Matt. vii. 18, xii. 33), whose wills and hidden springs of action were brought into harmony with the will of God. He carried back the idea of righteousness from the outward act to the motive from which it springs (Matt. v. 21-48). Only twice, in the case of healed lepers, did He commend priests or offerings (Mark i. 44, Luke xvii. 14). The whole of the ceremonial law, so far as it concerned clean and unclean food, He abolished at one stroke by the saying that "whatsoever from without goeth into the man, it cannot defile him" (Mark vii. 18, 19, R.V.).\* During the earliest period of His ministry, He allowed His disciples to baptize, after the manner of John; but the Fourth Evangelist expressly mentions that Jesus Himself did not use the rite (John iv. 1, 2). After the death of John, He only speaks of baptism (apart from Matt. xxviii. 19) in the sense of *suffering* (as in Mark x. 38, 39); and, while He lays down the conditions of discipleship with the utmost solemnity (as in Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33), He never mentions baptism as one of them. He takes in His arms little unbaptized Jews, and declares "Of such is the Kingdom of heaven."

The Apostles themselves are thoroughly in line with the prophetic teaching, as deepened and enriched by their Master. They also make little or nothing of ceremonies. They continued to baptize converts, but the real evidence of conversion was not found in the ceremony but in reception of the Spirit.† Paul

\* If this is true, may we not equally conclude that nothing from without going into a man can *cleanse* him, even if it be "consecrated" bread and wine?

† See above, p. 17.



gives thanks that he himself had baptized hardly any of his converts at Corinth, and says expressly, "Christ sent me not to baptize."\* When the Apostles came together to decide what to do about binding the observance of Jewish ceremonies on their Gentile brethren, they agreed to loose them from almost the whole burden—and made no mention of any *new* ceremonies to take the place of the old ones.† In their Epistles the whole insistence is on the inward life of love to Christ and the practice of love to men, and (apart from 1 Cor. x., xi.) there is hardly an allusion to ceremonies of any kind, except in disparagement. The Epistle to the Galatians is a fiery indictment of those who were trying to persuade the Gentile converts to tie themselves to "works of law" (see esp. Gal. iii. 1-5). The Colossians (ii. 16, 17) are exhorted to let no one judge them in regard to meat or drink, feast days, new moons, or even sabbaths, which, were all "a shadow of the things to come"—a preparation for the substance or "body of Christ" which was now their portion. The whole argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews is directed to show that all the Jewish rites were but figures of the reality into which Christians had entered, and that Christ was the only Priest. The author includes "baptisms and laying on of hands" with the mere rudiments that the true Christian must pass beyond (Heb. vi. 1, 2). The only sacrifice left for man is the sacrifice of praise and of doing good (Heb. xiii. 15, 16). The author of the first Epistle of John takes the utmost care to make clear what a Christian is, and he mentions no ceremonies. The one sufficient test is the presence of the Spirit which begets in him the life of love (1 John iii. 14, 19, 24; iv. 7, 11-13).

\* 1 Cor. i. 14-17. Could he possibly have said this, if he had ever heard of the supposed command to baptize in Matt. xxviii. 19?

† Acts xv. 28, 29.

## DID OUR LORD ORDAIN CEREMONIES ?

Now, in the face of this study of the teaching of the prophets, of Christ Himself, and of the Apostles, is it *likely* that our Lord would establish new ceremonies for perpetual observance in His church ? I am bound to say that to me the antecedent improbability of His doing so seems overwhelming. I could only be convinced that this judgment is wrong by clear evidence that some important facts have been omitted from the survey.

There are two passages (and only two) in the Synoptic Gospels in which Jesus is represented as ordaining ceremonies ; and New Testament criticism shows that both these are under grave suspicion. They are :

Matt. xxviii. 19 : " Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."\*

Luke xxii. 19 : " And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you ; this do in remembrance of me."

(Note that in the parallels, Mark xiv. 22-24, Matt. xxvi. 26-28, there is nothing corresponding to the words *this do*).

Taking the first of these, it has long been held doubtful whether, in its present form, the passage can be regarded as preserving a genuine word of Jesus. It is, indeed, present in all manuscripts ; but it must be remembered that we have none extant earlier than the fourth century. The Trinitarian formula appears

\* Mark xvi. 16, " He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," was not in the original Gospel of Mark. The passage from verses 9 to 20 is part of an appendix added in the second century to complete the book, the original ending of which was lost. See Moffatt's translation of the New Testament, p. 67.

nowhere else in the New Testament.\* The Apostles in the *Acts* baptize into the name of Jesus simply—which is fairly clear evidence that they did not know of any formula having been given them by their Master. The church historian Eusebius (fourth century) in his earlier works frequently quotes the passage in a simpler form: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations in my name," without any mention either of Baptism or of the Trinity. It has been much debated whether or no this is evidence that he had access to MSS. which gave the passage in this shorter form. Whatever the answer may be, there can be little doubt that either the evangelist himself, or someone later, has expanded the saying to bring it into accord with the baptismal formula which had become prevalent, perhaps as early as the end of the first century.† Thus it would be rash to press this single passage as convincing evidence that the risen Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize—especially in the light of the total absence of any such insistence in the days before His death.

In regard to the other passage, Luke xxii. 19 (the only passage in the Gospels that appears to ordain the "Supper," as a ceremony,) it should be noted that we have in the Synoptic Gospels *two* accounts of the "Supper," those of Mark (whom Matthew follows almost verbally) and of Luke. In Mark's story,

\* The three "heavenly Witnesses" in 1 John v. 7 (A.V.) have disappeared from the R.V., as the passage is not in any Greek MS. earlier than the thirteenth century. It appears in Latin MSS. after the time of Priscillian, about 380 A.D. The concluding benediction in 2 Cor. xiii. does not of course constitute a "formula" in any sense.

† Dr. James Moffatt concludes that the passage as we have it is due to the evangelist himself (*Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, p. 254.) If he is right, the passage affords evidence of a late date for the appearance of this Gospel—probably not much before the end of the first century. Kirsopp Lake, on the other hand, (*Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II. p. 380) thinks the evidence is against the historical character of the traditional text.

xiv. 22-24, the purpose of our Lord in handing out the bread and wine appears to have been to *prepare* His disciples for His death as the prelude to the coming of the Kingdom (Mark xiv. 25)—which preparation was undoubtedly, during the last weeks, His most pressing anxiety. There is no suggestion here of His enjoining anything to be done afterwards as a *memorial* of His death; the ceremony is *anticipatory* of the Kingdom; which, as He takes this solemn method of assuring them, can only come through the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood.

But Luke's story agrees in the main with that which Paul gives in 1 Cor. xi. 23-25. In both occur the words *this do*. And Paul's account of what happened, we must remember, is the earliest we have.\* If we look closely at Luke's narrative, we shall see that it is confused. The "cup" is mentioned *twice* (verses 17 and 20), once before the bread and again after. It is believed by many New Testament students that the second mention of the cup, which alone contains the words *this do*, has been inserted into Luke's gospel, out of 1 Cor. xi. It is absent in several important MSS. Westcott and Hort, in their edition of the Greek Testament, were convinced that it was not in Luke's Gospel as first written. If they were right, there is no institution of the Supper as a ceremony to be found in the Gospels at all. Our only authority for it is the Apostle Paul—and he certainly was not present. We have, in fact, to weigh his account of what Jesus said and did against that given by Mark, who probably had Peter behind him, and to consider which is the more likely to be correct. It is by no means easy to account for Mark's omission to record

\* Probably 1 Cor. was written about A.D. 57; Mark's Gospel not much before A.D. 70. Luke's Gospel must have appeared about the same time as the one we call Matthew's (since neither seems to have made any use of the other): either in the seventies, or (as I am inclined to think more probable) in the nineties.

the institution of the rite, if the facts were as Paul declares. The great difficulty is that Paul appears to claim direct Divine authority for what he states. "I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (verse 23). Many attempts have been made to explain what he meant by this, but I do not feel altogether satisfied with any of them.\* In any case I believe that Mark's account of what occurred on that last evening is the more trustworthy.

Moreover, it should be noted that whoever transferred Paul's narrative into Luke's Gospel left out some words of importance. Paul reports Jesus as saying, "This do, *as oft as ye drink it*, in remembrance of me"; and in the next verse he implies that they would continue to drink it until the Lord's "coming," which he doubtless expected soon. The words "ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come" confirm the impression we get from Mark xiv. 25 that the ceremony was an *anticipation* of the coming of the Kingdom, which could only be brought about through the death of Christ. There is nothing here, nor in any of Paul's epistles, to suggest that he thought of the rite as a *permanent* institution in the Church, essential for its deepest life in Christ.

#### THE WITNESS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Passing now to the Fourth Gospel, which cannot have been written much before the end of the first century—a time when, as we know from the letters of Ignatius (about 110 A.D.), sacramental ideas had already become prevalent in some parts at least of the Church—we note the striking absence of any insistence on ceremonies. This wonderful book was called by Clement of Alexandria "the *spiritual* Gospel"; and

\* For one of these see *The Lord's Supper*, by J. W. Graham, pp. 23-30.

its main purpose was undoubtedly to bring out what the author believed to be the deeper meaning of the life and teaching of Jesus. It is full of symbolism—Christ is the Bread, the Shepherd, the Door, the Vine—but I find in it no sacramentalism in the narrower sense of the term. Indeed, I am strongly inclined to believe that the author *intentionally* ignored and even disparaged the outward rites, in order that he might give fuller emphasis to the underlying reality. It is he who tells us that “Jesus baptized not.” He deals more fully than any other Evangelist with the events of the last evening, and never once mentions the bread and wine. It is he who records the words, “It is the spirit that maketh alive; the flesh profiteth nothing” (John vi. 63).\*

But what about His solemn declaration to Nicodemus that “except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” (John iii. 5)? Well, here again the word “water” is under some suspicion of having been inserted under later ecclesiastical influences. It is absent in verse 8, which has simply “born of the Spirit”; but some MSS. have inserted it here also. But, even if we take the passage as it stands, is it not clear that “water and the Spirit” means simply *spiritual water*? Is not the passage an echo of Ezek. xxxvi. 25: “And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart also will I give you”? Professor Kirsopp Lake writes:

“It may fairly be doubted whether the words ‘water and’ are really original in the text. They are without connection with the context, and seem to have been unknown to Justin Martyr.† If they be omitted, the

\* See E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel*, pp. 122ff.

† About 170 A.D.

reference to baptism . . . would seem to be rather of the nature of *a significant silence about the material element*, which amounts to a protest against the emphasis laid on it in other circles. Even if the words be retained, the emphasis in the passage is entirely on the Spirit and not on the water."\*

Then there is the other notable passage in the address of Jesus in the synagogue at Capernaum after the feeding of the five thousand (John vi. 52-59). "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves." I can well believe that the author of the Gospel had in mind the mystical eating and drinking of the Communion Supper; but I find it difficult to understand how anyone who appreciates his use of symbolism can think that he is here insisting on an outward rite. To me the suggestion seems to empty the figure of all its poetry and power; to be akin to the dull materialism that failed to apprehend our Lord's allusion to the "leaven" of the Pharisees. It appears to me far more probable that the author took this mode of pressing home the truth that it is only as Christians experience the Christ formed within them—only as their characters are being transformed into His character—that they have eternal life in their souls; and that apart from this spiritual feeding the outward rite is of no account. The passage is, I believe, a gentle protest against such ideas as men like Ignatius were already beginning to express—Ignatius, who calls the bread broken in the assembly "the medicine of immortality."†

\* *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II., p. 384.

† *Letter to the Ephesians*, § 20. We may note that the author of the Fourth Gospel adopts a similar course in regard to the expectation held by the Church as to an outward "second coming" of Christ. He never attacks the belief directly, but quietly replaces it by the promise of the coming of Christ into the souls of men as the "Comforter."

## HISTORY OF THESE RITES.

It would be quite impossible, in the space at our disposal, to follow out in any detail the historical development of the Sacraments in the Church. All I can do is to indicate a few of the main features, with the design of bringing out two points in particular :

1. That the idea of some *inherent* (or semi-magical) efficacy in the rites themselves was derived in the main from pagan sources. (It appears to me that some such idea necessarily underlies any discussion of the " validity " of the rites, if, as is usually the case, this means more than their performance according to rule.)

2. That the changes which the Church has sanctioned and enforced in the methods of conducting the ceremonies are almost as great as would be the change of dropping them altogether.

(a) *Baptism.*

It is quite obvious that the practice of Baptism was not *instituted* by Jesus Christ, inasmuch as it was used by John before Him. The disciples of Jesus took over a custom already in existence, which they felt to be appropriate to the work their Master had given them to do, and which, at least in the early days of His ministry, He no doubt sanctioned. How did John the Baptist come to adopt the rite ? It is generally assumed that it was a practice of the Jews to baptize their proselytes on admission to the Jewish faith, but of this there seems to be no clear evidence till towards the end of the first century after Christ. There were, of course, numerous ceremonies of *washing* ordained, but nothing that appears really to resemble baptism. Among the Greeks, and many other pagans, ceremonial purification with water formed part of the rites of initiation ; but it is not in the least likely



that such practices influenced John the Baptist, or were even known to him. It seems to me probable that it had come to be regarded as a feature of the Apocalyptic expectation of the Jews (note John i. 25), and that John the Baptist adopted it as a sign that the " Kingdom " was close at hand.\* Those who repented of their sins were thus " sealed for the Kingdom of God " by an outward act.

This would afford help in explaining why, our Lord Himself underwent baptism at the hands of John. His chief reason, I cannot doubt, for wishing thus to " fulfil all righteousness " (Matt. iii. 15) was to place Himself absolutely side by side with, and to make Himself one with, His brethren whom He had come to help and save. But if He already knew that in a very special way the bringing in of the Kingdom would be His work, there would be good reason why He should associate Himself with the rite that was regarded as a preparation for its coming. The fact that He submitted to it does not indicate either that He felt He needed inward cleansing for Himself, or that He regarded outward rites as necessary for His followers.

In the primitive Church, baptism was closely associated with the two thoughts of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit (Acts ii. 38). It was applied only to *converts* to the new faith and to their families (Acts xvi. 33) ; I find no evidence anywhere that the first Christians ever thought of administering it to the children of those who had long been believers, either as infants or when they grew up. It was universally taken for granted that the religious " status " of children was the same as that of their parents. Paul declares that the children are " holy " if even one of their parents is a Christian (1 Cor. vii. 14).†

\* See article in the *Expository Times*, Oct. 1915, pp. 38, 39.

† See *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, article by Prof. J. Vernon Bartlet, Vol. II., p. 379.

How then did the great change take place from the immersion of an adult convert—a beautiful and appropriate symbol of repentance and conversion in a hot and dusty land—to the later practice of sprinkling water on the head of an unconscious infant? The answer must be found in the idea of a magical efficacy in the rite itself, which entered Christianity mainly\* from pagan sources—especially (it seems) from the practices of initiation familiar to the Greeks in their "mysteries." In these rites purification by water was largely practised, and was regarded as cleansing the initiate from the stain of sin, and as conferring some kind of "new birth." The belief that baptism was somehow connected with the gift of the Spirit led on, under the influence of Greek ideas, to the notion that, if rightly administered, it conveyed some subtle "grace" to the person on whom it was performed. To this there was added the growth of belief in "original sin," inherited by children from their parents, which baptism was supposed to wash away. So that by the third century many Christians came to believe that the benefits which the rite was imagined to secure, for this world and the next, ought to be conferred at as early an age as possible. The idea of baptismal regeneration had "come to stay."

The disuse of immersion was no doubt a matter of convenience and of health, as Christianity spread into colder countries. Thus the *Didache* ("Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," early second century) prescribes that baptism is to be in "living water :"

"But if thou hast not living water, baptize in other water; if thou canst not in cold, in warm. But if

\* I say "mainly" because it seems possible to find traces of magical ideas even in the New Testament. Note the custom of being "baptized for the dead," which Paul alludes to at Corinth, though without expressing approval of it (1 Cor. xv. 29); and compare his belief that an unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper might cause disease and even death (1 Cor. xi. 30).

thou hast not either, pour water upon the head thrice, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (*Didache*, vii. 1-3).

Another great change consisted in restricting the administration to the clergy. At first it seems clear that any Christian could baptize a convert, and even the *Didache* is silent as to who is to do it. Ignatius is, I believe, the first to insist that it must not be performed "without the bishop," which probably means without his permission. As the belief in magical efficacy grew, and with it the supposed necessity of due forms being observed, so the administration was confined to clergy properly ordained. And so we come to the belief that baptism was in normal cases only "valid" when performed by a priest in the name of the Trinity.\*

The changes indicated were rapid but profound. The simplicity and beauty of the Apostolic practice was lost, ideas unethetical and unspiritual came to be attached to the rite, and the power of the priesthood was magnified. But I do not think that anything has been gained by our friends the Baptists from their attempt to return to primitive simplicity by reviving adult immersion. It is not suited to our climate, and it seems to preserve the letter at the cost of the spirit. Moreover, as I have already pointed out, there seems to be no primitive authority for the baptism of adults who have been brought up in Christian homes. For such persons there may be danger of unreality in the profession of a total conversion.

I do not wish to say that there may not be a right place in the Church for outward acts akin to Infant Baptism, and also to Adult Baptism or to Confirmation.

\* In cases of necessity, the Church taught that baptism might be performed by a layman, or even by a woman, if the right words were used, and if there was the intention to baptize (See *Encycl. of Rel. and Eth.*, Vol. II., p. 399).

There does seem to be a need (and I should be willing to admit that the Society of Friends may have suffered from the absence of any provision for it), for the solemn dedication of a child to God by its parents ; and also for the self-dedication of a young man or woman whose mind is made up to follow Christ—both, I mean, in the presence of the Church. But I do not find evidence of spiritual loss from the fact that we have never been baptized by a priest, or received Confirmation by the laying on of a bishop's hands. What we desire to aim at is the baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

(b) *The Lord's Supper.* \*

Here the great change was made from *a common meal*, of a social and joyous character, shared by a company of believers in Christ, with no thought of the necessity of a priest, to a solemn rite in which consecrated bread and wine were handed out by an ordained minister. At first the "breaking of bread" together, after a "eucharist" or thanksgiving,\* seems to have been practised daily (Acts ii. 42, 46), but specially on the first day of the week (Acts xx. 7), probably because that was the day of the Resurrection. Abuses crept in, at any rate at Corinth, where it seems the meal was sometimes disorderly, the food and drink being consumed by those who arrived first, so that the late-comers got none (I Cor. xi. 20-34). Paul insists on the solemn character of the occasion, and tells his friends that it is not to be an ordinary meal for satisfying hunger ; for whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup *unworthily* is "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (verse 27). The germ of "high" sacramental ideas is certainly here, and I think we may safely say

\* "Eucharist," the Catholic name for the Holy Communion, is from the Greek verb *εὐχαριστέω*, to return thanks, especially before a meal, as in Matt. xv. 36 and Acts xxvii. 35. • In Luke xxiv. 30 we have "blessed," a different verb.

that Paul (unintentionally perhaps) was one of the authors of them (compare 1 Cor. x. 16, 17); but they did not in the first century influence the Church as a whole. No doubt it was he who began the separation of the meal, the love-feast or Agapé (Jude 12), from the solemn ceremony that later came to be known as the Eucharist. But the separation was very gradual. In the *Didache* they are not clearly divided, but it seems the bread and wine were taken first, after a "Thanksgiving," the form of which is given,\* and none were to take it but those who had been "baptized into the name of the Lord." There is a second Thanksgiving, to be used after the company is "filled"; but nothing is laid down as to who is to pronounce either. It is said, however, that if a "prophet" is present he is "to give thanks as much as he will"—that is, he is not to be tied to the particular form of words.

From the letters of Ignatius it seems that at Antioch, early in the second century, there had been a further development in the direction of a solemn religious rite, but curiously he still calls it an "Agapé" or love-feast. He is the first, I believe, to apply the term "valid" to the ceremony when duly performed by, or under the control of, the bishop.

"Let that be held a valid eucharist which is under the bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it.

\* The "Thanksgiving" is simple and beautiful, and thoroughly Jewish in tone. (Note the wine, as in Luke xxii., comes before the bread).

"We give thanks to Thee, our Father, for the holy vine of Thy servant David, which Thou didst make known to us through Jesus Thy servant; to Thee be the glory for ever.

"We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou didst make known to us through Jesus Thy servant; to Thee be the glory for ever.

"As this broken bread was once scattered on the face of the mountains [*i.e.*, when the seed was sown], and, gathered together, became one; even so may Thy Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom; for Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever" (*Didache*, ix. 2-4).

. . . It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast."\*

The expression "the medicine of immortality," which (as we have previously noticed) he applies to the broken bread, shows how easily magical and superstitious ideas crept in. The infusion of these ideas was hastened by the assimilation of the Eucharist to some of the rites connected with the Greek Mysteries, which from the second century onwards had an enormous vogue in the eastern parts of the Roman Empire. The researches of modern scholars make it practically certain that familiarity with these pagan rites (which had much in them that was mystical, and even spiritual,) had great influence in developing the Catholic ideas of consecration of the bread and wine, of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, of the Lord's table as an altar, of feeding on the actual body and blood of Christ; and with this of magnifying indefinitely the power of the priests who alone could perform the great miracle.†

What became of the common meal, which was the earliest form of the Lord's Supper? It was, as we have seen, separated from the Sacrament, and though it lingered for a while it eventually disappeared.

"Finally," says the late Dean Stanley, "the meal itself fell under suspicion. Augustine and Ambrose

\* *Letter to the Smyrneans*, § 8.

† See Graham, *The Lord's Supper*, pp. 42-50. Even Paul recognised a similarity between the Supper and some pagan rites. He speaks in 1 Cor. x. 21 of "the table of the Lord and the table of devils [i.e., heathen gods]." Earlier he had spoken of the cup and the bread as a "fellowship (a sharing) of the blood and body of Christ" (verse 16). We should carefully contrast with this the strong words against regarding Christian sacrifice as parallel to non-Christian rites which we have in Heb. xiii. 9-16 (see Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, pp. 454, 455). The heart is to be "stablished by grace, not by meats": the argument, unlike that of Paul in 1 Cor. x. and xi., is definitely against sacramentalism in the narrower sense.

condemned the thing itself, as the Apostle had condemned its excesses; and in the fifth century that which had been the original form of the Eucharist was forbidden as profane by the Councils of Carthage and Laodicea. It was the parallel to the gradual extinction of the bath in baptism."\*

In the face of such changes, is there much value in an "unbroken tradition," and may it not be wise to dispense with the ceremony entirely? I believe it is—though for my own part I would never try to draw anyone away from sharing in the Communion service if he finds that by so doing he gains a deeper consciousness of fellowship with Christ. There is a real and important place in the Church of Christ for those who can prove that their union with Him is independent of such outward aids.

Against the "Catholic" idea that there is some mysterious virtue in the rites themselves, whether of Baptism or the Eucharist, provided they are administered by a duly ordained priest and with the proper words, I am sure that a protest is needed. We cannot shut our eyes to the extent to which this false belief has led vast masses of people to suppose that their spiritual position is secure, in this world and the next, because certain ceremonies have been duly performed.

But if the other view is held, which on the whole the Reformers have taken—that the Sacraments are merely *symbols* of spiritual truth, as the flag is a symbol of the authority of one's country, or a ring of marriage—even so there are serious dangers. The symbolic idea has constantly tended, and still tends, to pass over into the magical; especially when it is held that only a duly ordained minister can rightly perform the ceremony. If a person knows the reality

\* *Christian Institutions*, p. 55.

without the symbol, he may find the latter needless ; while, if he does not know it, the symbol may be a delusion and a snare.

On the whole my judgment is clear that we are right in dispensing with water Baptism, and with the celebration of the Lord's Supper—provided we make, more, and not less, of the realities for which they stand, and seek to weave them into all our life. Can we find, like the early Christians, that our ordinary meals are true eucharists ? Let us use eagerly the silent pause for thanksgiving with which we have been taught to begin them, but which it is to be feared is too often formal or neglected. Stephen Grellet once said, near the end of his life, that, since his conversion to Christianity, he did not remember that he had ever taken a meal without thinking of the broken body and the shed blood of his Lord. Was not he a Sacramentalist in the real sense ?



## CHAPTER V

### CHURCH GOVERNMENT

"The doctrine of the inner light, as Fox understood it, did not do away with corporate authority. It did profoundly affect the character of that authority, particularly the manner in which it was exercised. To begin with, authority is lodged in the whole community, and not in any class within the community. . . . Every individual member is responsible for the maintenance of discipline and the exercise of authority, just as every member is responsible for the ministry. Discussion of practical issues must therefore be free and open. It must also be conducted in a spirit of waiting upon God. There must be no striving for victory, nothing but seeking for Truth."

H. G. WOOD, *George Fox*, p. 118.

#### ORGANIZATION IN A SPIRITUAL SOCIETY.

EVERY religious society that has shown persistent life has necessarily developed some kind of organization. If people are to act *together*, for spiritual no less than for what we call secular purposes, they must meet one another, agree upon plans and arrangements, frame rules, in order that they may not work at cross-purposes, and delegate different parts of the work to different persons. In the early Church, when the first believers "had all things common, and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need" (Acts iv. 32-35), it was found necessary to appoint special officers to attend to this distribution, in order that justice might be done to all, and that the Apostles might be free for proclaiming the new message (Acts vi. 1-6). It is quite clear that the consciousness of the Spirit's presence and guidance, which is the most distinctive fact in primitive Christianity, did not supersede the need for human arrangements. God worked through human instrumentality,

and men were not relieved from the necessity of planning how His work might be most effectively performed.

The danger always is that when an organization has been set up, and has been working for some time, it should come to be thought of as an end in itself, instead of simply as a means to an end. People get so accustomed to it that they imagine the work could be done in no other way, and even that the organization itself is of Divine appointment. So they drift into routine. The organization becomes a machine, whose working receives more attention than the life that created it, which is the only reason for its existence. In the pregnant words of the late Dr. Edward Caird: "The idea creates the organization, but the organization destroys the idea."

#### ORIGIN OF MONTHLY MEETINGS.

In the earliest years of the Quaker movement, the need for organization was hardly felt. As we have seen, the pioneers had no thought whatever of creating a new religious body; their mission was to bring the whole Christian Church back from error to truth.\* But the opposition they encountered from the religious authorities, and the fierce persecution to which they were subjected by the civil powers, soon made it clear to them that arrangements must be made to care for those who suffered, and for their families; and also to provide for the support of the "publishers of Truth" during their journeys throughout the country. It was also seen that, if the proclamation of the message were to be effectively carried on, thought must be given to the method of conducting the campaign, to selecting the strategic points of attack, to securing places for assembly, and so forth. There was no idea of making such arrangements a *substitute* for the

\* See above, pp. 16, 28.

Divine leading. That was always first and foremost in their thoughts ; and neither George Fox nor any of his companions assumed authority, like that of Jesuit " Superiors," to direct the movements of others unless these felt " freedom " to go where their services seemed to be needed. Any Friend who felt it laid on him or her to undertake a particular piece of work was free to follow the leading of the Spirit, and to receive the needful help if the " concern " was felt to be " in the life."

As the Quaker movement first took root in the north of England, so it is there that we find the earliest signs of organization. The first " Monthly Meeting " appears to have been established at Swafthmore (near Ulverston) in 1653, and in the next year we hear of one at Durham. These seem to have been mainly composed of " Elders " from several neighbouring congregations of Friends—the " Elders " at this time being simply the most prominent and able Friends in a meeting, who were chosen as natural leaders without (it would seem) any formal appointment. The special purpose of their meeting monthly is stated to have been the care of the poor—and, in the case of Swarthmore, " to see that all walked according to the Truth." It was some years before any similar organization was settled throughout the country generally.

#### QUARTERLY AND YEARLY MEETINGS.

At the same time, during the years before 1660, we hear much of " General Meetings " of Friends and others drawn from a wider area, frequently that of a whole county, or even several counties. Their purpose seems to have been, in the main, spiritual fellowship and the proclamation of the word ; but the opportunity was generally used to make collections for the poor and for " the service of Truth," and sometimes

also to prepare letters of advice and encouragement to Friends in the district. Such was the origin of our "Quarterly Meetings."

The "Yearly Meeting" for the whole country had a similar beginning. In 1658, we hear of two "General Yearly Meetings": first at Scalehouse, near Skipton, (chiefly for the north of England), whence an epistle was issued asking for a collection in aid of Friends travelling, "beyond the seas"; and second at John Crook's, (probably at Beckerings Park, near Ridgmount, in Bedfordshire,) "for the whole nation." The minutes of this meeting contain the first mention of "Overseers," as officers in each meeting having the charge of administering funds collected. In 1660 the Yearly Meeting was held in London, and from 1668 this continued without a break till 1904, since which time it has been occasionally held in some large provincial city. The minutes of the Yearly Meeting are extant from 1672.

It seems to have been during George Fox's long imprisonment in Scarborough Castle, 1665-6, that he first felt laid upon him the urgent need of organizing the meetings of Friends throughout the county on the northern model. After his release, he devoted himself assiduously to this task. He formed five Monthly Meetings in London, and travelled over the country recommending to Friends "the setting up of the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in all counties, for looking after the poor, taking care for orderly proceedings in marriages, and other matters relating to the Church of Christ."\* This organization was also his special care during his later visits to the American Colonies; and he was concerned for the setting up of Monthly Meetings for Women, with whom, he thought, should especially rest the care of the sick and the poor.

\* *Journal* (Bicentenary Edition), Vol. II., p. 247.

## QUAKER MARRIAGE

The matter of Marriage, to which he alludes in the passage just quoted, was one of much importance. From the first Friends had taken care to preserve accurate records of births and deaths among their adherents ; but marriage was a more difficult matter. They refused to recognise the authority of a priest to declare people man and wife ; and they equally objected to be married by a civil magistrate. They felt that marriage was essentially a religious act, in which the Church was concerned ; and they devised a procedure whereby, with all possible publicity, a man and woman simply took one another in marriage in the presence of a company of Friends. As early as 1653 Fox advised that those desiring to be married should lay their intentions

“ before the faithful in time, before anything were concluded, and afterwards publish it in the end of a meeting, or in a market, as they were moved thereto. And when all things were found clear, they being free from all others and their relations satisfied, then they might appoint a meeting on purpose for the taking of each other in the presence of at least twelve faithful witnesses.”\*

This was not, at the time, lawful marriage, and the Friends endured much until in 1661 the result of a *nisi prius* case at Nottingham caused such marriages to be legally recognised.†

## OPPOSITION FROM RELIGIOUS ANARCHISTS

In all these matters Fox showed himself a statesman as well as a prophet. His plans for the celebration of marriage seem to have been generally accepted, and to

\* *Journal*, Vol. II., p. 88.

† *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 145, 6.

have been worked without opposition from within ; but this was by no means the case with his organization of Monthly Meetings. Still stronger resentment was felt by some Friends at the setting up of Women's Meetings.

Whence came this opposition ? It was, in the main, the result of a one-sided application of the principle of the Inward Light, which was so understood as to rule out all organization whatever. Each person must follow his own Light, and no group of Friends, or of meetings of Friends, had any claim to interfere. To his own Master each individual must stand or fall, and human authority had no place. •

This was the spirit of pure individualism, or religious anarchism, which had found its extreme developments among the Ranters, and which was a very serious difficulty. It seemed logical to urge that the principle of the Inward Light, once recognised, must lead to this and no other conclusion. But in reality it was the outcome of the false " dualism " to which allusion has already been made,\* which separated rigidly between the Divine and the human, the natural and the supernatural. So long as this dualism was not transcended, there was no real answer to the plea that each individual following an infallible Light was himself infallible. The sorrowful lapse in 1656 of James Nayler, who had been one of the loveliest spirits of the early movement, brought deep searchings of heart. In spite of his very heartfelt penitence, Fox found it extremely hard to forgive him for the scandal he had brought on the " Children of the Light."† From that time onwards we find a growing recognition, among all the more sober spirits, that the individual's apprehension of Divine leading needs to be checked and controlled by the corporate guidance of the body. In 1673 an epistle

\* See above, p. 39, note.

† *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 272-274.

was sent out, signed by the most prominent Quaker leaders of the day, dealing with the need for kindly wisdom in the exercise of church discipline. It pleads :

“ That none join to such a singular spirit as would lead him to be sole judge in his own case, but in the restoring and healing spirit of Christ both the offended and the offender may for the truth's sake submit to the power of God in His own people. . . . And if any will not give up his matter to the judgment of truth in his people, he doth but render himself and his cause suspicious, and [shows] that he wants the sense of the fellowship of the Body.”\*

The leaders of the opposition to the organization set up by Fox were John Wilkinson, John Story, and William Rogers. There had been previous difficulty with the half-mad John Perrot, whose special craze was against the practice of removing the hat during vocal prayer to God in the meetings. They opposed disciplinary action being taken against Friends who “ walked disorderly,” and some of them even argued that no regular meetings should be arranged beforehand, but that Friends should come together when moved by the Lord to do so. They objected to collections for the support of travelling ministers and their dependents. They wrote and spoke of Fox as a would-be Pope. Though schism was for a time averted by the efforts of Fox and others, and Wilkinson and Story in 1676 signed a recantation of their errors, a secession took place, and the meetings of Friends in many parts of the country were divided. But the seceders soon “ melted away like snow,” as undoubtedly the Society itself would have done had they succeeded in controlling its policy. The ablest refutation of their mistake was issued in 1676 by Robert Barclay, under

\* Devonshire House MSS. Quoted by Harvey, *Rise of the Quakers*, p. 159.

the title *The Anarchy of the Ranters*, in which he shows that the seat of Divine authority is not exclusively in the individual, but also in the church, which has the power to declare what it is the body stands for, and what supposed leadings of the individual are, and what are not, in accordance with the principles that have brought the body together and made it a unity.

#### · RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY MEMBER.

The ideal that George Fox held before him, when organizing his Society, was that of a complete democratic theocracy. That is to say, every member of the body of adult age, whether male or female, was (at least in theory) given an equal responsibility and an equal voice in arriving at decisions, so long as all was done under the Divine leading and in the Divine life. The unit of control was not made the congregation—for many of the local meetings of Friends were small and weak—but the Monthly Meeting, representing a number of congregations, so that the stronger could help the weaker. To these local groups autonomy was given, subject to certain control from the larger groups called Quarterly Meetings, and finally from the Yearly Meeting of the whole country,—which became the legislative body, with power to set forth the principles for which the Society stood, and to alter its discipline when necessary. Each Monthly Meeting has unfettered power to admit new members, to care for its own poor, to admonish or even expel the disorderly, subject to the right of appeal to the higher meetings. I doubt whether any religious body can show a more harmonious combination of local autonomy with central unifying control.

#### CORPORATE GUIDANCE : THE ABSENCE OF VOTING.

The ideal of corporate guidance is kept before Friends, both in the devotional spirit in which they



are trained to meet for the business of the Church, and also by the fact that voting is never resorted to.\* Each meeting for the business of the Church is presided over by a "Clerk," who combines the functions of Chairman and Secretary, preparing and directing the business and keeping the minutes. All meetings are begun with a devotional pause, with opportunity for vocal prayer. When a proposal has been introduced and discussed, the Clerk reads a minute embodying what he takes to be "the sense of the meeting," and offers it for criticism or amendment. It is usually accepted in substance, but occasionally further expression of opinion shows that it has not stated the real decision of the meeting, in which case it may have to be fundamentally altered. It is very rarely indeed that the Clerk is charged with want of impartiality. In gathering "the sense of the meeting" he is supposed not merely to count the numbers who speak for or against the proposal, but to judge in part by the weight of the arguments used and by the experience of the speakers.

This may be thought a slow and difficult method of procedure, but it has great advantages. Party spirit and its bitterness are conspicuous by their absence, and a decision arrived at in this manner is almost always loyally accepted by those who are unable to get their way. As a young man, I was deeply impressed by a debate in London Yearly Meeting on the Richmond Declaration of Faith (1888), when the effort was made by a number of leading Friends to promote (as they thought) the unity of "orthodox" Friends throughout the world by the adoption of an elaborate statement of belief. The proposal aroused intense feeling on both sides. It was debated for a whole day in a crowded meeting of over one thousand Friends

\* I refer to the meetings in the British Isles, and to the more conservative meetings in America. Voting has been introduced into many of the meetings there that are conducted on "pastoral" lines.

(men and women), every one of whom had the right to speak ; and in the end the whole meeting fully accepted the decision of the Clerk that it was not prepared to adopt the Declaration.\* The general usage is that, when a proposal is made which involves a new departure, if there is any considerable opposition, even on the part of a minority, the matter is dropped or deferred : the meeting waits for further light.

When any Friend, or group of Friends, wishes to bring forward a matter that concerns the Society as a whole, it is usually introduced in a Monthly Meeting, which (if it approves) sends it forward to the Quarterly Meeting, and this to the Yearly Meeting. But way is generally made for Friends under urgent "concern" to bring forward matters at any meeting for business, usually by previous arrangement with the Clerk.

#### THE POSITION OF WOMEN.

As regards the position of Women in the counsels of the Society, the theory was from the first that they were exactly on an equality with men. But in practice this was not entirely the case. Until recent years the women met separately, in Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings ; if any decision was reached in the men's meeting that seemed to concern the women they were informed of it, and their opinion was asked. But it was always open to the men's meeting to ignore or over-ride their judgment ; and its decision became the decision of the Society. This was naturally felt by many to be an inadequate recognition of women's equality ; and for the past twenty years or there-

\* It is fair to admit that there have been times in the history of the Society, especially in America, when division has been so acute that the method has broken down. Each side has used every device open to it to obtain a Clerk favourable to its own view ; and the result of such proceedings has usually been one of the lamentable separations, from which, in this country, we have been for the most part preserved. (See my little book *Separations, their Causes and Effects*).

abouts nearly all the meetings for business have been held as joint meetings of men and women, in which all have an equal voice.

#### ADVICES AND QUERIES.

The ideals of Christian living which the Society holds are impressed from time to time on the members by the "General Advices," and the "Queries," which are read in Monthly Meetings at least once a year, and also, in many cases, at the close of a Sunday morning meeting for worship. Formerly Monthly Meetings were expected to send up to the Quarterly Meetings written answers to the "Queries," and these, when summarised for the Yearly Meeting, provided the basis for the important session or sessions devoted to "the State of the Society." But the answering of the Queries was found to involve so much formality that it has been discontinued, and they are now merely read out and pondered.

#### THE MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

The "Meeting for Sufferings" is a central committee of the Society, which, as its name implies, was originally formed for recording and relieving, so far as possible, the sufferings to which Friends were subjected before the days of religious toleration. It meets monthly in London, and is composed of representatives from the Quarterly Meetings. "Recorded Ministers," and "Elders" also have the right to attend and take part in the proceedings. It has now become the Executive Committee of the Yearly Meeting, and carries on the work of that body between the annual gatherings. The name is often felt to be still appropriate; for many notes of the "still sad music of humanity," the world over, from the days of Slavery downwards, have found an echo in these meetings. Any specially acute or widespread suffering, like that

caused by Russian famines, Armenian massacres, or European war, may receive sympathetic consideration, which not infrequently leads to concerted measures for its alleviation. Since the introduction of the Military Service Acts, which have imposed compulsory military service on our country during the war, the primary function of this Meeting has been revived, and much attention has been devoted to the sufferings of conscientious objectors to military service, who cannot with a clear conscience undertake alternative work, as well as to the efforts made for the relief of distress among sufferers from the war. The War Victims Committee, which is now at work in France, Holland, and Russia, is a Committee of the Meeting for Sufferings, and the Emergency Committee, for the relief of alien enemies in trouble in this country, was set up under its auspices at the very beginning of the war.

#### OFFICES IN THE SOCIETY. •

The principal offices in the Society of Friends are those of *Overseer* and *Elder*. These officers are appointed, triennially, by the Monthly Meetings. The work of the Overseers is pastoral in character. They are expected, in a brotherly spirit, to make themselves acquainted with the members and attenders of a meeting, to visit their homes, to care for the children and see that they are properly educated, to attend to the needs of the poor, and to deal with any whose conduct is causing, or likely to cause, trouble in the congregation. In cases of serious wrong-doing, they may, after loving care has been given, propose to the Monthly Meeting that the delinquent be disowned; or be merely removed from the list of members if he or she has simply ceased to show interest in the Society.

The main work of the Elders is to foster more directly the spiritual life of the congregations, specially in regard to the vocal ministry. It is their part to give help and

advice, when needed, to persons who speak or offer vocal prayer in the meetings for worship, to encourage those whose services are felt to be helpful, and to consider whether any are withholding such service as they might well give. It is also expected that the Elders will convey loving admonition to any who may be troubling the meetings with too wordy or unhelpful utterances. On rare occasions it may be needful to ask an ill-advised speaker to resume his seat. It is clear that Friends are required for these delicate duties who are endowed with sympathy and spiritual discernment, and who understand something of the difficulties and inward struggles of those who are beginning to feel the call to vocal service. .

### THE MINISTRY.

There is no *office* of Minister in the Society of Friends ; but it has long been customary, when a Friend speaks often and acceptably in a congregation, for a proposal to be made to the Monthly Meeting that his (or her) gift in the ministry should be formally recognised. If this is done, the person becomes a " Recorded Minister " ; but the recognition conveys no privilege except that of attending the Meeting for Sufferings, which the Elders also enjoy. The practice of " recording " ministers has of late years been often objected to, as tending to create an unreal distinction, to lead persons whose gifts are thus recognised to use them too freely, and to relieve others from feeling their full responsibility for the vocal service of the meetings. In some Monthly Meetings the practice of " recording " has been discontinued, without (so far as I am aware) any harmful results, and in some cases, apparently, with advantage to the spiritual life of the congregations.

When a Friend (whether a recorded minister or otherwise) feels a " concern " laid upon him for any ministerial service, such as visiting the meetings of

Friends in a particular district, he (or she) brings it before the Monthly Meeting. The matter receives careful consideration; and, if it is felt to be "in right ordering," a minute of liberation and encouragement is given which he may carry with him as an introduction. Should the "concern" be for service in another country, it is sent forward by the Monthly to the Quarterly Meeting, and thence to the Yearly Meeting—or, if there is not time for this, to the Meeting for Sufferings. Travelling expenses, when required, are of course provided.

These "concerns" for ministerial service are less frequent now than formerly—partly, no doubt, on account of the growing complexity of business, and the many claims of social and religious work of various kinds. Most Friends who are actively engaged for the good of their fellows are co-operating with other agencies, both civic and religious, much more than in the days when the Society was largely isolated from public life and occupied with its own affairs. The Adult School movement has claimed the best powers of many Friends who might otherwise have devoted themselves to such ministerial service as we have been considering.

#### MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY.

In the early days of the Quaker movement there was no clearly-defined membership, but anyone who attended the meetings of Friends and appeared to be "convinced" was regarded as a Friend. It was perhaps difficulties with extravagant or disorderly people, like the "Ranters," that made a more definite membership seem necessary. Friends sometimes had to make it clear that they were not responsible for the wild doings of people who abused the liberty which the Quaker meetings seemed to offer. They were always careful to relieve the wants of their own poor, that none

might become a charge on the public purse ; and this made it needful to have a list. Also, when (especially after the Toleration Act of 1689) Friends began to prosper, and some of them grew wealthy, gifts and legacies began to come for the use of Friends ; and it was thought necessary to define exactly who had a right to share such benefits. Thus grew up the practice of keeping an exact list of members in each Monthly Meeting. From the first, Friends seem to have held the Apostolic principle that children share the religious " status " of their parents\* ; and so the practice of " Birthright Membership " came naturally to be adopted. The custom has long been to add to the list of members all children born to parents both of whom are in membership with Friends, but not those who have only one parent a member. As a large number of our members now marry non-Friends, the result is that very many of the children of Friends are not enrolled as members.†

Much may be said both against and for the use of Birthright Membership ; but I cannot find room to discuss the question here. It can, I think, be certainly said with truth that the privileges and responsibilities of membership in a religious society might be more heartily appreciated than they are by some, especially among those who have it by right of birth. At the same time, it is equally certain that no human arrangements will yield a Christian society which is *entirely* composed of genuine Christians ; and though, as previously suggested,‡ it is worth considering whether some simple form of public confession of desire to follow Christ might not be introduced, for those who wish for the privileges of full membership, it is not clear

\* See above, p. 80.

† For figures see below, p. 104.

‡ See above, p. 83.

that the Society of Friends is more burdened with nominal members than are other religious bodies where Birthright Membership has no place.\* Many young Friends as they grow up fall quite naturally into a place of service in the Society, and their Christian life develops healthily without any formal profession of "conversion."

Besides the list of Members, a list is also kept in each Monthly Meeting of "Attenders" not yet in membership who make a meeting of Friends their usual place of worship. When any of these desire to become members, a letter of application is addressed to the Clerk of the Monthly Meeting, and is considered at its next gathering. One or two Friends are usually appointed to interview the applicant and report to the next meeting; and if their report appears satisfactory to the meeting the applicant is admitted and added to the list of members. Each Monthly Meeting is entirely free to use its own judgment on the matter, and the practice varies in different localities. Perhaps it would be well if more uniformity prevailed; or at least if the Yearly Meeting could lay down some general principles for the guidance of the Monthly Meetings. In some cases the main stress, in considering an application for membership, seems to be laid on the Christian experience of the applicant; in others on his agreement with the principles and practices of the Society. On the whole it is probable that most Monthly Meetings are disposed to admit to membership persons who appear to be sincerely desirous to live a Christian life, who find the meeting for worship helpful, and who are in general agreement with Friends as to the non-necessity of outward Sacraments, and the un-Christian character of War. It is often felt that, if a

\* Except, of course, in so far as our democratic constitution gives more power to all members, if they choose to exercise it, than is given in most other religious bodies.



person's face is set in the right direction, he or she will come by closer association into a fuller understanding of our Christian profession, and that minute agreement on every point need not be expected at the outset.

### STATISTICS (1915).

This may be the best point at which to give a few figures showing the position of the Society of Friends in Great Britain at the present time.\* The statistics include a few hundred Friends in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, whose membership is in London Yearly Meeting; but not those in Ireland, Canada, or the United States, nor in Denmark and Norway. In other countries, apart from the foreign mission churches, there are few or no settled meetings of Friends. The number of members the world over is probably about 150,000, of whom some 100,000 belong to the "pastoral" Yearly Meetings in the United States and Canada.

Congregations in Great Britain	∴	407
Members .. .. .	∴	20,007
Habitual Attenders not in Membership		6,802
Recorded Ministers† .. .. .	∴	314
Elders .. .. .	∴	785
Overseers .. .. .	∴	1,566
Admitted during 1915 .. .. .	∴	384
Added by birthright .. .. .	∴	126
Lost by resignation, etc. .. .. .	∴	168
Lost by death .. .. .	∴	277

\* From the Minutes and Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting, 1916. During the two years 1917 and 1918 there was a small net loss of members, owing apparently to an increase in the number of resignations on account of the war.

† See above, p. 100.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SIMPLICITY AND TRUTHFULNESS : JUDICIAL OATHS.

" Our testimonies are, to a degree which is, I think, hardly understood outside the Society, the result of individual and spontaneous obedience to the bidding of individual conscience, and to the guiding of the Divine light shining in each heart, rather than of conformity to rules enforced or even, precisely laid down by any human authority. They are collective, but unformulated ; subjects for discipline, yet not prescribed or regulated ; familiar and even notorious peculiarities, yet varying indefinitely in the degree in which they are maintained by individuals."—CAROLINE E. STEPHEN, *Quaker Strongholds*, pp. 126, 7.

" Moral reality is of the very essence of authentic religious life."

RICHARD ROBERTS, *The Venture*, Dec. 1916, p. 67.

<sup>1</sup> IN this chapter and the next I shall be treating of some of the special " Testimonies " which, in addition to the use of silence and freedom in public worship, mark off Friends from most other professing Christians. A Quaker has long been known as a person who objects to fighting, and to taking an oath in a court of justice ; he used to be recognised as wearing a particular kind of dress, and using a peculiar speech : addressing a single person, however exalted, as " thou," and calling the days of the week and the months of the year by their number instead of by their " heathen " names.

What few people (not themselves Friends) have ever cared to enquire about is the *source* and reason of such peculiarities ; and possibly there have been Friends who have adopted them simply from tradition, without troubling to seek their inner meaning and value. It will, I believe, be found that, in so far as these practices

can be justified, they are direct consequences of the central principle of Quakerism, the Inward Light. The matter of War and Peace must be deferred to the next chapter; the others being, so far as appears needful, dealt with here.

While the early Friends held, with unanimous conviction, the belief that the Light is given to all men, they insisted with equal emphasis that its efficacy, as a guide to practice, is conditional on *obedience*. It was, they said, those who were willing to walk steadily in the Light who alone could experience its clear shining. Hence a deep and penetrating desire for *reality* and sincerity marked the Quaker character at its best: the longing to get behind conventions and formalities to the reality that alone had ultimate value. It was this that led, as we have seen, to the disuse of outward forms in worship. Real worship must be "in spirit and in truth"; and the same spirit of sincerity and reality must cover all life and conduct. The true Quaker saw life as a whole; he could not found his "religious" activities on one principle and his "secular" ones on quite another. If in public worship he could only approach God with his real self, divested of the trappings that made him appear other than he truly was, the same must hold in all the affairs of life.

#### INTEGRITY IN BUSINESS.

The Quaker desired for himself this life of inward transparency and reality; but (in the early days at least) he had no thought of resting content with his own inward purity, while opposite principles prevailed in the world that called itself Christian. He felt that he was out to transform the world into that, which God intended it to be. At the very outset of his public work, George Fox records (under date 1649):

“ About this time I was sorely exercised in going to their courts to cry for justice, and in speaking and writing to judges and justices to do justly. . . . In fairs also, and in markets, I was made to declare against their deceitful merchandise, cheating, and cozening ; warning all to deal justly, to speak the truth, to let their yea be yea, and their nay be nay ; and to do to others as they would have others do unto them.”\*

The Friends themselves strove to live up to this standard. Those of them who were in business appear to have been the first to set fixed prices on their goods—refusing to follow what was then the usual practice of asking more than they intended to take.† The result of this novel usage, added to their other peculiarities, was that at first they lost customers ; but later, as their integrity came to be recognised, it brought them a prosperity to which we may ascribe, in large measure, their subsequent decline in missionary zeal. In a classical passage of his *Journal* George Fox writes :

“ At the first convincement, when Friends could not put off their hats to people, or say You to a single person, but Thou and Thee ; when they could not bow, or use flattering words in salutations, or adopt the fashions and customs of the world, many Friends that were tradesmen of several sorts lost their customers at first, for the people were shy of them and would not trade with them ; so that for a time some Friends could hardly get money enough to buy bread. But afterwards, when people came to have experience of Friends’ honesty and faithfulness, and found that their yea was yea, and their nay was nay ; that they kept to a word in their dealings, and that they would not cozen and cheat them ; but that if they sent a child to their shops for anything, they were as well used as if they

\* *Journal* (Bicentenary Edition), Vol. I., p. 39.

† For proofs of this, see *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 152, 211, 523.

had come themselves ; the lives and conversation of Friends did preach, and reached to the witness of God in the people. Then things altered so that all the inquiry was, ' Where is there a draper or shopkeeper or tailor or shoemaker or any other tradesman that is a Quaker ? ' Insomuch that Friends had more trade than many of their neighbours, and if there was any trading they had a great part of it. Then the envious professors altered their note, and began to cry out, ' If we let these Quakers alone, they will take the trade of the nation out of our hands.' '\*

It is clear that in that day honesty in business paid in the long run—when people were honest from principle, at the risk of present loss, and not simply from motives of expediency.

#### PECULIARITIES IN SPEECH AND DRESS.

The disuse of customary forms of speech, to which allusion has been made, was the outcome of the same desire for inward sincerity and reality, coupled with the democratic feeling of the equal worth of all men in the Divine sight, in virtue of the Light of God within them. Then, as now on the Continent and in many of our own rural districts, " You " was regarded as the proper address to a superior, while to inferiors and family intimates " Thou " was customary. The Friends simply refused to make the distinction, retaining " Thou " for all. It was the same feeling that led them to keep on their hats, even in the presence of judges and magistrates—a practice which caused them many severe sufferings—because they said that such marks of honour as the removal of the hat should be reserved for God alone. (The retention of the hat in

\* *Journal*, Vol. I., pp. 185, 186.

places of worship, except during vocal prayer, was regarded as a testimony against the false idea that one place could be in itself more holy than another).

In so far as the practice of saying "You" to a single person has become universal, and is no longer a mark of social distinction, the reason for its use has largely disappeared. The same may be said of the removal of the hat by a man on meeting a person of the opposite sex. If a man takes off his hat to a "lady," but not to a housemaid, he may well consider whether the Quaker ideal should not constrain him not to take it off at all. Most Friends would now remove their hats on entering a church or chapel—out of respect, not to the character of the building, but to the feelings of other people. It would be felt that if a Friend could not conscientiously enter such a place without doing violence to the sentiments of others, he should not enter it at all. The Quaker disuse of the "heathen" names of months and days never, in my judgment, had a solid basis, and I do not think we need regret its disappearance.

As regards dress, there was at first no uniformity of costume, though the Friends sought after plainness and simplicity. The women did not entirely abjure bright colours. I saw some years ago an old account book, kept by some of Margaret Fell's daughters, which shows that even after they had become Friends, and some of them ministers, they did not object to spend money on ribbons and dyes and coloured garments. But, even before the end of the seventeenth century, the objection of Friends to following the changing fashions of the world led to the retention of a dress that had been discarded by others, and so to a "plainness" that began to approach uniformity. And quite early in the eighteenth century we find, from the records of disciplinary action in many Monthly Meetings, that immense importance

had begun to be attached to dress\* and speech. The protest against formality quickly degenerated into a new formalism, which was in danger of becoming as tyrannous and soul-deadening as any that had been left behind. That is, no doubt, one of the chief reasons why, in this country, at least, the Quaker dress and speech have been so largely dropped.

It would, I think, be a grave mistake to conclude that Quaker "plainness" never had any value, or that it is no part of a Christian's duty to cultivate simplicity in attire, in the furnishing of a house, and so forth. *Æsthetic* taste may, I believe, rightly have more place in our minds than it had in those of our ancestors, and among the Puritans generally; for beauty is one of the means of God's self-revelation to us. But simplicity and beauty may very well go together—as, indeed, may ostentation and ugliness. What I believe we have to seek after is *true values*, and not the false values which "the world" too often puts on things. It is of the essence of worldliness to aim at doing what others do, and at what they expect us to do, while ignoring the essential worth of the things aimed at. And, if our best attention is to be reserved for the things of the spirit, as with the Christian it certainly ought to be, we must be willing to let mere appearances fall into a secondary place. As our Book of Discipline says:

"Our testimony respecting simplicity is wrongly understood if it is interpreted as mere self-discipline or self-mortification. It does not require any rigid rule as to the outward things of life; but it is the outcome of the necessity which the disciple instinctively feels of subordinating everything to principle. In all times Christians have been constrained to free themselves from luxurious and self-

\* See *The Quaker: a Study in Costume*, by Amelia M. Gummere.

indulgent ways of living. . . . In life, as in art, whatever does not help hinders. In all kinds of effort, whether moral, intellectual, or physical, the first condition of vigour is the resolute surrender of that which is not essential. Is it likely that the highest life, the life of the Christian, can be carried on upon easier terms?''\*

### LUXURY.

This seems to be the best point at which to introduce a few words on the subject of luxurious living, which is certainly inconsistent with the Quaker ideal of simplicity. The question What constitutes Luxury? cannot be dismissed by the easy answer that it is all a question of income, that what would be luxury for a poor person may be simplicity for a rich one, that there is no common standard. There is a true standard, in this as in other things, though it may elude our attempts to define it. It goes without saying that a person ought not to spend money on things that he or she cannot rightly afford; what we are in search of is some principle that will guide us in regard to what we can afford.† Such a principle may be found in the endeavour after *true values*, which has been already touched on. The Christian must ask himself such questions as these: Will the proposed expenditure minister mainly to personal comfort, vanity or ostentation; or will it tend to elevate, refine and beautify my own life and the lives of others? Will it help me in discharging my real duties, in living the best life of which I am capable? Further: is there a reasonable relation between the

\* *Christian Discipline of the Society of Friends*, Part II., pp. 91, 92. Quoted in part almost verbally from *Quaker Strongholds*, p. 144.

† I do not overlook the consideration that the income which makes luxurious expenditure possible may be itself wrong; but discussion of the just distribution of wealth is impossible here.



satisfaction. I shall obtain from the purchase of an article (or a service) and the labour of others involved in its production? And how far am I justified in spending money on my own comfort, and thereby separating myself more and more from my fellow-creatures who are in want?

### RECREATIONS AND AMUSEMENTS.

Similar considerations apply here also. The early Quaker ideal retained much of Puritan strictness, and most of the customary forms of recreation, such as dancing and, the theatre, were entirely ruled out. The same prohibition was for generations extended to music. At the present time nearly all such prohibitions have gone, and Friends are left to consult their own consciences in these matters. The latest edition of our Book of Discipline (revised in 1911) makes no attempt to arrange recreations into two classes, prohibited and allowed. Its revisers doubtless remembered the danger of those who, in the words of *Hudibras*,

"Compound for sins they are inclined to  
By damning those they have no mind to,"

What they did instead was to suggest the considerations that Friends should keep before them in deciding for themselves, under the guidance of the Inward Light, whether any particular kind of recreation is permissible or not.

"Does it necessitate any wide or lavish expenditure of time or money? Does it involve annoyance or danger to others? Does it involve cruelty to animals? Is it bound up with evil associations, which, even if they are not its inevitable accompaniments, may in practice bring us or others into temptation? Does it exercise a demoralising influence on those who provide

it for us? Does it interfere with our growth in grace or our service for our Lord?" \*

### MARRIAGE.

Simplicity and sincerity in regard to marriage have always been insisted on among Friends, and the equality of man and woman in the sight of God has been recognised. We noted above how the Friends declined to be married by any human authority, whether priest or civil officer, and simply took one another in the presence of God and of their friends assembled in a meeting for worship. The woman never, I believe, promised obedience to the husband. (Even the wedding ring was long disused, as by many of the Puritans, but it has now become customary). The same form of words is used by both parties, with the necessary substitution of "wife" for "husband" and *vice versa*. After a time of silent worship the bride and bridegroom rise, facing the meeting, and, taking each other by the hand, declare in turn: "Friends, I take —— to be my <sup>wife</sup><sub>husband</sub> promising through Divine assistance to be unto <sup>her</sup><sub>him</sub> a loving and faithful <sup>husband</sup><sub>wife</sub> until it shall please the Lord by death to separate us." †

Then a certificate is read by an officer of the meeting, after signature by the parties and their chief relatives, and it is usually left for further signature by any of the witnesses present who, after the close of the meeting, incline to add their names. There is generally a further time of worship, with opportunity for vocal prayer or exhortation, and then the meeting

\* *Christian Discipline*, Part II., pp. 105, 106.

† This form of words was probably framed with reference to such a passage as Mark xii. 25. It alludes only to separation *as husband and wife*, and is not (of course) intended to imply that those who love one another here will have their affection cut short by death.

closes, the parties retiring to sign the necessary documents supplied by the official registrar of the district.

Great care has long been taken by the Society to impress upon young people the solemn character of marriage. In the "General Advices" they are urged, if contemplating marriage, to pay regard to the judgment of their friends, and to seek earnestly for Divine guidance. The paramount necessity of love and devotion to one another has been, perhaps, too much taken for granted ; but in the last edition of the Discipline it is emphasized in a passage which I may be excused for quoting at length :

" Marriage is an ordinance of God, appointed for the help and blessing of both man and woman, and for the right upbringing of the next generation. Our Lord, in His teaching, drew very close the bonds of marriage ; and the well-being of any people depends, in large measure, on the purity, strength, and love that mark its family life. The union of husband and wife is therefore fraught with momentous issues, and is not to be thought of lightly. The first condition of happiness and blessing in marriage is the presence of devoted love ; a love which is not the outcome of mere passing attraction, but which is deepened and enriched by the love of God. Every such union should be undertaken in the fear of the Lord, and with a reverent attention to His counsel and guidance. It will be owned and blessed by Him if the healthy love that draws two human souls together is sanctified by the larger love of Christ and of His brethren ; it will yield its fairest fruit as it is chastened by the discipline of care and trial bravely borne, and ripened into self-forgetting devotion by the mutual influence of parents and children. The family is the standing witness that man is not intended to live alone ; that he becomes what he is meant to be as his character is trained in unselfishness by responsi-

bility for others, and by the claims and duties of a common life."\*

The result of this care about marriage in the Society of Friends is that, while unhappy unions are not unknown, they are certainly far less frequent than among the population at large. Divorce is so rare as to be almost unheard of. It could be wished that the facts were better known than they are, especially among people who plead for greater facilities for divorce. Quaker experience seems to suggest that the true remedy for failure in marriage is to be found by beginning at the other end, and by securing that it is undertaken in the right spirit and with a proper realisation of its overwhelming importance in the life of the community.

#### JUDICIAL OATHS.

Perhaps none of the "Testimonies" of the early Quakers brought them greater suffering than their refusal to take an oath in Courts of Justice. In the reign of Charles II., and even earlier, it was not uncommon to secure a conviction against a Quaker by tendering him the oath of allegiance and supremacy, which it was well known he would not take. The penalty for refusing it might be outlawry and the forfeiture of all property, under the sentence of "premunire," and this was frequently inflicted in spite of perfectly sincere protestations of loyalty to the king.†

Whence came this "testimony," and on what was it based? It had been frequent among the mystical sects that preceded the Quakers,‡ though the latter

\* *Christian Discipline*, Part II., p. 57.

† See Mrs. Emmott's *Story of Quakerism*, pp. 44, 45, 80. Also *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 446, etc.

‡ R. M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, pp. 142, 211, 360, 387, 436, etc.

seem to have known little of this fact. No doubt the obvious reason for it, and the explanation usually given, was the very emphatic command "Swear not at all" in the Sermon on the Mount, which is re-echoed in James v. 12. But the foundation on which our Lord is reported to have based His prohibition—"your word shall be yea, yea; nay, nay; *for what is more than these is from the evil one*" (Matt. v. 37)—verified itself in the conscience and experience of the Friends. They saw that an oath is required in a Court of Justice because it is feared that without its terrors a person will not speak the truth. The oath therefore is the outcome of a low standard of truthfulness; and a Quaker was nothing if not truthful. He could not disobey so plain a command of Christ, and conform with a custom which implied doubt of his general truthfulness. And so he was willing to suffer any penalty rather than shuffle with his conscience.

The result of this fidelity was a gradual gain of religious liberty, not for Friends only but in the institutions of our country. By the Toleration Act of 1689, Friends were permitted to affirm instead of swearing their allegiance to the King. Subsequent measures, a few years later, allowed them to substitute an affirmation for an oath in ordinary cases before the Courts—the penalty for making a false affirmation being, of course, the same as for perjury. In 1833, the right of affirmation in every case in which an oath might be required was extended to Moravians as well as Quakers; and a little later this was further extended to people who had *formerly* been Quakers or Moravians.\* Finally the refusal of Charles Bradlaugh (who professed no religious belief) to take the oath on assuming his seat in the House of Commons led to the Oaths Act of 1888, whereby it is now permitted that

\* Further details are given in a note on p. 138 of *Christian Discipline*, Part II.

any one who objects to take an oath on the ground either that he has no religious belief, or that it is contrary to his religious belief to do so, may make a solemn affirmation of intention to speak the truth.

Has this liberty been abused, as the opponents of change always predicted that it would be? On the contrary, there is, I believe, no case known, after more than two hundred years, of a prosecution for making a false affirmation; while anyone who has experience of Courts of Justice knows that the not infrequent prosecutions for perjury represent only a minute fraction of the cases where persons under oath deliberately state what they know to be false. In 1897 the late John S. Rowntree stated, at the Scarborough Summer School: "After making careful enquiry in this country and in the United States, I have been unable to discover that any person has ever been convicted of making a false affirmation."

It may be objected that the making of a solemn affirmation of intention to speak the truth is as contrary to the Quaker spirit of entire truthfulness as an oath would be—since it implies, equally with the oath, a double standard: one for ordinary life and another for Courts of Justice. This objection is, I think, a valid one; and if so it calls for the endeavour to raise the general standard of truthfulness by securing, if possible, the abolition of any formal affirmation or oath, simply altering the law against perjury so as to make it apply to any deliberate falsehood in giving evidence. I believe that such a change in the law would be highly beneficial; but it can hardly be won by the method of passive resistance. For it is not easy to see how anyone can say that it is against his conscience to declare that he means to speak the truth. It might be well if Friends and others who take the same ground, when claiming the right to affirm, would preface their affirmation by the assurance to the Court

that it is meaningless to them, since they always endeavour to speak the truth. At the same time, it is to be desired that some, who have this matter at heart, should gather evidence from Judges and others having much experience in Courts of Justice, as to the low standard of truthfulness that prevails in spite of the oath; and that this evidence should be used for securing further change in the law.

Meanwhile, the following hint from the "Book of Discipline" should have attention:

"We encourage Friends to spread a knowledge of the law as it now stands, in order that those who feel a conscientious objection to the taking of an oath may make wider use of its provisions."\*

\* *Christian Discipline*, Part II., p. 139.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TESTIMONY FOR PEACE

"We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever; this is our testimony to the whole world. And whereas it is objected: 'But although you now say that you cannot fight, yet if the Spirit move you, then you will change your principle, and fight for the kingdom of Christ,' to this we answer: that the Spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move unto it; and we certainly know, and testify to the world, that the Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, nor for the Kingdoms of the world."

From "A Declaration from the harmless and innocent people of God, called Quakers," presented to King Charles II. upon the 21st day of the 11th month, 1660.

(Printed in full in Fox's *Journal*, Vol. I., pp. 494-499.)

THE Society of Friends has been very severely tested by the outbreak of the great European War. Its Peace principles are widely known, and (in times of peace) respected; but could they survive a conflict in which, as it appears to nearly every Britisher, a foreign military Power has aimed at the domination of the world, and debased the moral currency of the nations by setting at naught the claims of humanity, and flouting the hard-won restraints of international law? Some members of the Society have felt it their duty to share the national sacrifice by offering themselves as soldiers; but not a few of its best and bravest have unflinchingly borne the even harder test of resisting, in fidelity to principle, the public opinion of the country, and refusing obedience to the law that has made military service compulsory. Many more young men of military age, and many women, have found fields of service where, without violating their



convictions, they could help in binding up the wounds of war, and manifesting, alike to friends and foes, the goodwill on which alone can be founded any stable peace.

But it is impossible here to deal with the present situation, thrilling as it is. All that can be attempted is to trace, with much brevity, the history of our Peace testimony, and to indicate what appear to be its true foundations and its real meaning, and along what lines we may seek solutions of the many difficulties of applying it in practice.

### HISTORY OF THE QUAKER TESTIMONY.

In the early Christian Church, during the first two or three centuries (until we approach the union of Church and State under Constantine), it was generally held, at least by the more spiritually-minded leaders, that in military service Christians could take no share. The historian Lecky says :

“ A powerful party, which counted among its leaders Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, and Basil, maintained that all warfare was unlawful for those who had been converted ; and this opinion had its martyr in the celebrated Maximilianus, who suffered death under Diocletian solely because, having been enrolled as a soldier, he declared that he was a Christian, and that therefore he could not fight.”\*

At the same time he points out that, though the calling of a soldier was strongly discouraged, it was not by most Christians regarded as absolutely sinful. “ Soldiers returning even from the most righteous war were not admitted to communion until after a period of penance and purification ” ; but “ they were

\* *History of European Morals*, Vol. II., p. 248.

not cut off from the Church." Tertullian, while he says that "the Lord disarmed Peter, and in doing so unbuckled the sword of every soldier,"\* also states in his Apology that "we sail with you and serve with you in the army."† He evidently disapproved himself, but recognised differences of judgment among Christians.‡

The same view of the unchristian character of war was taken by many of the mystical and reforming sects of the Middle Ages, and later—as by the Cathari, the Waldenses, the Lollards and the Anabaptists.§ Most of these held that war as well as oaths were forbidden to the Christian. This was also the view of Henry Nicholas, the founder of the "Family of Love." So that the emergence of the same convictions among the Quakers was no accident—it was the natural outcome of their mystical and experimental Christianity.

Its first appearance, so far as I am aware, was in the earliest years of George Fox's public ministry. In 1650, during his imprisonment at Derby, he was offered a captaincy in the Parliamentary army, but he refused.

"I told them I knew from whence all wars arose, even from the lust, according to James's doctrine; and that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars."||

A little later, shortly before the battle of Worcester (1651), he was pressed for a soldier, and imprisoned again for refusing to serve.¶

\* *De Idol*, xix.

† *Apol.* xlii.

‡ For a fuller treatment of the attitude of the early Church, see Wilson, *Christ and War*, pp. 69-74, and Graham, *War from the Quaker Point of View*, pp. 23-32. An exhaustive study of the subject has just appeared, by Dr. C. J. Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War* (1919).

§ R. M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, pp. 135, 365, 387, 395, etc. Also *Christ and War*, pp. 75-86.

|| *Journal*, Vol. I., p. 68.

¶ *Ibid*, p. 72.

Fox himself never wavered from the assurance that he had reached an experience that not only made fighting impossible, but removed altogether the spirit that led to it ; but he does not seem to have been in a hurry to press this view upon his friends until they were shown it by the Spirit of God in their own hearts. The celebrated story of his reply to William Penn, who is said to have asked him what he should do about his sword—" Wear it as long as thou canst "—may be mythical, but it is true to life. Many soldiers became convinced of " Truth," and were apparently left to find their own way out of the army so soon as its inconsistency with their profession became clear to them. It is certain that most of them very soon began to find they could not remain soldiers ; in Scotland and Ireland a number were dismissed from the army.\* Their following of the Light within them made them dangerously independent of the army discipline.†

It was but gradually that the Light led some of the Quaker pioneers themselves to see the true logic of their position. Some, who knew that they themselves had been brought off entirely from outward warfare, held that, in a State which was only very partially Christian, an Army had a necessary place as God's instrument for the punishing of wrongdoers. The fiery Edward Burrough (it must be remembered that he died in prison at the early age of twenty-eight) wrote in 1659 to the Army that " the Lord may work by you, to break down the briars and thorns and rocks and hills that have set themselves against the Lord."‡ In 1661 Isaac Penington wrote " Concerning the Magis-

\* *Beginnings of Quakerism*, pp. 228, 229.

† *Ibid*, p. 520. Colonel Daniel wrote to General Monck, concerning a Quaker captain in his army, " I am afraid lest by the spreading of these humours the public suffer, for they [the Quakers] are a very uncertain generation to execute commands."

‡ *Works*, pp. 537-540. Quoted in *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 359.

trate's Protection of the Innocent," that the true defence of a nation was righteousness, which would remove the cause of wars. "Nevertheless," he goes on,

"I speak not this against any magistrates or people defending themselves against foreign invasions, or making use of the sword to suppress the violent and evil-doers within their borders; for this the present state of things may and doth require, and a great blessing will attend the sword where it is borne uprightly to that end, and its use will be honourable. . . . But yet there is a better state, which the Lord hath already brought some into, and which nations are to expect and travel towards."\*

At Bristol, in 1659, seven Friends were appointed Commissioners for the militia. Alexander Parker, in doubt about the matter, wrote to consult Fox, who seems to have advised against their taking the appointment. Early in the next year he definitely advised that two Friends, who had been offered posts in the army, should not accept them.† The position of the Society was finally cleared by the declaration addressed to Charles II., towards the end of 1660 (quoted in part at the head of this chapter) to show that Friends had, and could have, no part or lot in political intrigues against him.‡ From that time onwards there is no doubt that the Society as a body has borne a corporate testimony

\* *Works*, Vol. II., pp. 177-186. The passage quoted is certainly out of harmony with the general drift of the essay; and perhaps George Whitehead had it in mind when (in the "Testimony" prefixed to Vol. I.) he advised the reader, if he should find anything "doubtful" in the writings of I.P., to "let it have such charitable construction as becomes a Christian spirit."

† *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 462. A note endorsed on one of the letters says, "Which G. F. forbid, and said it was contrary to our principles."

‡ About 1681 the Declaration was reprinted, with the addition, "This was our testimony above twenty years ago; since then we have not been found acting contrary to it, nor ever shall; for the truth that is our guide is unchangeable."

against war, as totally inconsistent with Christ's gospel of love and peace. With perhaps one exception,\* its official utterances have been clear and uncompromising, and the matter is kept before the attention of Friends by the periodical reading of the eighth Query :

“ Are you faithful in maintaining our Christian testimony against all war, as inconsistent with the precepts and spirit of the Gospel ? ”

This has been understood as indicating the duty of Friends to abstain, not alone from joining the army or inducing others to do so, but also from making money out of the manufacture of munitions and the like. It has not been used as a means of exercising coercion over private opinion, which has been left to the conscience of the individual ; nor, since Friends have been in Parliament, for fettering their free judgment as to the use of their vote in regard to the army and navy. If a Friend felt it right publicly to advocate additions to our armaments, it would be generally thought that he was acting inconsistently with our profession, and he might be brought “ under dealing.”

It should not be supposed that all Friends hold identical opinions on the matter, or that there have not been from the first those who regarded the Testimony rather as an ideal than as a guide for political action under existing conditions. But as soon as Friends were admitted to posts of responsibility in the Government they endeavoured to bring their principles, as far as possible, into practice. In this country they had little opportunity for doing so, until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century ; but in some of the American Colonies it was otherwise. The nature of the difficulties they met with will be

\* An address of congratulation to the Government on the defeat of the Young Pretender, dated May, 1746—a period, we may remember, when the spiritual life of the Christian churches in this country was at its lowest point.

indicated in the next chapter. It is obviously no easy matter for people who hold that war—and therefore also preparation for war—is forbidden to the Christian to share in the work of government with those who believe it to be necessary.

#### FOUNDATION AND NATURE OF THE TESTIMONY.

It has often been supposed that Friends ground their belief in the unchristian character of war upon a literal interpretation of certain texts in the New Testament: "Love your enemies"; "Resist not him that is evil"; "Put thy sword into its sheath"; "Live peaceably with all men." The apparent inconsistency of taking these passages literally, while insisting on a spiritual interpretation of the supposed commands to baptize and take the Supper, has been charged against Friends by Macaulay and many others. In reality, however, the foundation lies much deeper than an interpretation of any texts, as we have seen from George Fox's answer to those who wished to make him a soldier. The use of such texts as I have quoted provided the readiest answer that Friends could give to the Bible-worshippers of their day, who regarded Holy Scripture in all its parts as the pure and unadulterated "Word of God." It would have been useless for them to ground their testimony on an appeal to the Inward Light—a principle which their opponents for the most part did not in the least understand, and which was regarded as a blasphemous heresy.

Nevertheless, their conviction was the direct outcome of this central and foundation principle. In my judgment the Testimony can no more be dropped from Quakerism, like broad-brimmed hats and coal-scuttle bonnets, leaving the rest of the fabric entire, than you can take the heart out of a living animal and suppose that it will survive. This necessary connection of our Peace doctrine with the Inward Light is so little under-

stood that it may be well to treat it with some fulness, along three lines of thought.

(1) The Inward Light, for the Quakers, was not a principle of merely individual guidance, whereby one man might be led in one direction and another in a different one, with no common and objective standard of life and conduct. It was the light in their souls of the living *Christ*, and they never intended to separate this from the life and character of Jesus when on earth.\* They believed in His resurrection and in His spiritual return to His followers as the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. They felt, as Paul did, that Christ was living in them—reproducing in their lives the spirit, the character, the way of life of Jesus of Nazareth. He refused the use of force to set up His kingdom. He taught that the greatest in the Kingdom was the one who thought least of self, and was most completely the servant of all; and He lived out His own teaching. He endured all things, overcoming evil by the victorious power of love to the uttermost. Such, therefore, must be the way of life of His disciples also.

“ It is the way the Master went ;  
Should not the servant tread it still ? ” .

The thought is expressed by James Nayler, in words that every Quaker would have accepted :

“ This Seed all shall know [‘ Seed ’ was one of their favourite expressions for the Living Christ in the souls of men], which is beloved of the Father and heir of the everlasting kingdom, who strives not by violence, but entreats ; who seeks not revenge, but endures all contradictions against himself, to the end he may obtain mercy for all from the Father, and hath power to subdue all things by overcoming. So this seek in your-

\* I believe this statement is entirely true, though their Christology was defective and did in fact tend towards such a separation. See my lecture *The Historic and the Inward Christ*, pp. 32-39, 48-53.

selves and all men, and in it seek one another as brethren. This is that which is perfect, and is never to be done away, neither can it be overcome by the world; wrath cannot enter it, pride cannot enter it; it strives for nothing but to live its own life."\*

The early Quakers, like the primitive Christians, knew that they were out to overcome the world; and to overcome it as their Master had done, and was still doing in and through His faithful and obedient followers: "not by might or by power," but by the spirit of love and forgiveness and victorious trust in God. His method, their method, was not violence but martyrdom; and by this method, in the long run, evil really was "overcome"—the hearts of many men were changed, and the Light within them showed that what they had been trying to suppress as evil and heretical was good and true. Gentleness achieved a victory that force could never win.

(2) The fervent belief that the Light was given in measure to all men raised all human personality to a new dignity. Not Christians only, but Jews, Turks, Indians, savages, had something of God in them—something that could appreciate and would respond to truth and justice and goodwill. We shall see in the next chapter how this trust in men was fearlessly practised, and what triumphs it won.

This assurance of the Divine "Seed" in all men was reached by a kind of instinct rather than by any process of reasoning. The Quakers rarely attempted philosophic thought, and, when they did, they were handicapped by the prevailing "dualism" that marks nearly all the thought of the seventeenth century.† What they had rediscovered was the reality of the Divine immanence—the secret of all the mystics.

\* James Nayler's *Works*, p. 729.

† See above, pp. 39, 93.



Though they failed adequately to express it, the discovery transformed human relationships, and brought a new conviction of the brotherhood of all mankind. War was the open denial of that brotherhood. Could a Christian take part in destroying human bodies that were, at least potentially, each one of them a temple of the Holy Ghost ?

Expressed in philosophic language, the principle of the Inward Light means that in every self-conscious person there is at work the "Oversoul"—a Consciousness greater than his own. That which convinces him of the true, the beautiful, the good, is not his own reason merely, but a Universal Reason and Goodness which (so to say) is striving to express itself through him. So far as he yields himself up to it, and that expression becomes possible, he is brought into unity, not alone with God, but with the other human souls in whom also God is seeking to express His own nature.

In One human personality, the Christian believes, that expression was perfectly achieved, and unity with God and with all men perfectly manifested. Jesus Christ becomes therefore, for the Christian, the embodiment (so to say) of his Inward Light; and his own perfection will be approached as Christ is able to reproduce in him His own mind and character—to lift him up into a measure of His perfect unity with God and men.

The Christian therefore must ever strive after this unity. Whatever cuts him off from his fellow-men,—pride, greed, hate, revenge—so far cuts him off also from God revealed in Christ. The spirit that leads to war, the passions on which war feeds and which it inevitably engenders,—even when men presumptuously imagine themselves to be God's avengers for wrong and outrage,—are not of Christ but of Anti-christ.

(3) The Spirit of Christ being thus the final authority for the Christian, no human authority could rightly usurp its claims on his allegiance. The Quakers developed no new theory of the relations between the State and the individual; but their principles put very definite limits to the State's authority. They believed it to be their duty to obey the law, even when it was far from ideally just, up to the limit when it commanded them to do what the Spirit of Christ forbade. Beyond that they could not and would not go: they said, like the Apostles when ordered by the Jewish authorities not to teach in the name of Jesus, "We must obey God rather than men."\* To orders that invaded the sacred region of their allegiance to Christ they refused obedience, like the early Christians when commanded to worship the Emperor; and they took the consequences.

This meant, of course, that they could not become soldiers; for military discipline necessarily requires a promise of obedience to all orders from a superior officer. But, even here, many soldiers put in a claim for conscience. The late Lord Roberts, speaking in the House of Lords on the suggestion that the British Army might in certain circumstances be called upon to fire upon the loyalists of Ulster, insisted that there were some commands that no soldier could be expected to obey. "It is useless," he said, "at such a juncture to invoke the authority of the constitution, to raise fine points of law, or to threaten pains and penalties. Such things matter not one jot when men's consciences are aroused."† The Quakers simply carried this principle a little further, and refused (as many of their young men, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty, are still refusing) to surrender their con-

\* Acts v. 29; compare iv. 18-20.

† Speech in the House of Lords, July, 6th, 1914.

sciences to a human authority, to promise obedience to commands that might be contrary to the dictates of the Inward Light.

We find, then, that along three paths we are led to the conclusion that the Inward Light, faithfully followed, must lead into the way of Peace : first, that it is the Spirit of Christ reproducing in His followers the method and secret of Jesus ; second, that it implies the brotherhood of all mankind ; and third, that for the Christian it is and must ever be the supreme authority.

### SOME DIFFICULTIES CONSIDERED.

I propose now to deal in much brevity with a few of the many difficulties that Friends have to meet in striving to uphold their Testimony against war.

(a) It is said that in parts of the Bible, which to many Christians is still the supreme and final authority, war is not forbidden but encouraged and even commanded.

We have seen that to the early Quakers the supreme authority was not the Bible but the Spirit that (they believed) inspired its writers and must still inspire its readers if they are to understand and profit by it.\* We in this day have learned more than they knew of the very gradual process by which moral and spiritual Truth has been revealed to men. We see many ancient customs, like polygamy and slavery, long believed to have a Divine sanction, but now universally recognised among Christians as wrong. We see our Lord contrasting His inward law with the outward laws laid down, as it was believed, under God's own authority. We read the story of Abraham, and note how his obedience to the inward voice that bade him surrender his well-beloved son—interpreted by him, in accordance with the existing practice of human sacrifice, as a

\* See above, pp. 32, 33.

command to slay his child—was rewarded by a fuller revelation of the mind of God. We see how inspired prophets and psalmists reached the assurance that even animal sacrifice was not what the Lord required, but “to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him.” And so it is useless to ask us to judge the New Testament by the Old; for this would be to deny the moral progress of the race.

But even the common idea that the Old Testament is a book of war will not hold. The greater prophets not only foretold the day when “nation should not lift up sword against nation”; but they counselled their people, in the name of Jehovah, in the ways that made for peace. Isaiah, who was statesman as well as prophet, declared that “the work of *righteousness* should be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever.”\* He warned his people against trusting in “horses and chariots,” and making foreign alliances; assuring them that if they would practise justice at home and non-interference abroad they would be safe.† Jeremiah, a century later, was equally emphatic as to the uselessness of trusting to Egypt for help,‡ and was punished as a traitor for advising surrender to the King of Babylon.§ And the crown of Old Testament teaching is found in the pictures drawn by the later “Isaiah” of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah: of one who does not strive or cry, who hides not his face from shame and spitting, who is despised and rejected of men, wounded for others’ transgressions, and bruised for others’ iniquities||—the figure from which our Lord Himself drew His ideal

\* Is. xxxii. 17.

† Is.<sup>2</sup> xxx.-xxxii.

‡ Jer. ii. 36, compare xxxvii. 5-8.

§ Jer. xxxviii.

|| Is. xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-6, l. 4-9, lii. 13-14. 12.

of Messiahship, and of the method by which He should win His Kingdom. Anyone who reads the Old Testament with open eyes will find the plainest evidences of progress in the direction of the truth revealed by Christ.

As to the New Testament, in the light of what has been said already I find it quite needless to deal with the many arguments used to show that Jesus did not condemn war—all of which appear to me exactly to repeat the “proofs” that were offered abundantly a century ago that Slavery was quite compatible with Christianity.

(b) It is urged that in condemning war as unchristian Friends are bigoted and uncharitable ; that they are ruling out of the Christian fold many men as sincere and devout as themselves, who with a clear conscience support war, and who have shown their sincerity by willingness to lay down their lives in the cause of their country and of righteousness. The answer is that we do not for one moment condemn any man for being true to the light he has, and that we honour the devotion of the men who have offered their lives, and of the women who have freely given of the men they love, at their country's call. But we are sure that God has shown us a better way, and we also must be true to the light we have. All through history, as we read it, moral progress has been won by the faithfulness of the few to the new light that had dawned in their souls—and which often brought them into conflict with the prevailing judgment as to right and wrong.\* That is how the human conscience has been developed by the Inward Light ; and it is only as we are true to our conviction that war is contrary to the mind of God

\* “ It seems to be the will of Him who is infinite in wisdom that light upon great subjects should first arise, and be gradually spread, through the faithfulness of *individuals* in acting up to their own convictions.” Joseph Sturge—see *Memoirs*, p. 415.

revealed in Christ, that we can help humanity forward to its abolition.

(c) So far I have treated our Testimony mainly on its negative side, as a protest *against* war. This appeared to me to be necessary for the sake of clearness ; but it is not the whole truth. The common charge that our doctrine of "non-resistance" means standing on one side and passively allowing evil to be done is not justified—though even this is less foolish and ineffective than people often suppose.\* In reality our Testimony is not negative but positive : it does not mean letting evil alone, but overcoming it by good.

"The universal Peace that we set before us as our ideal is not a passive condition, in which the virile energies of mankind will atrophy from want of exercise ; it is an active movement towards the oneness of all humanity and the realisation of the Kingdom of God on earth ; it involves participation in a campaign of the most strenuous character against organized forces of evil ; and as such it offers unbounded scope for the consecrated zeal and courage of the most devoted followers of Christ."†

The truth is that our Testimony, rightly understood, involves unbounded faith in God : that is to say, in the efficacy of moral and spiritual forces. The claim that God will protect us if we do nothing to protect ourselves is often regarded as pure fanaticism, like that

\* For instance, I have heard that the Russian Dukhobors, after suffering severe persecutions for their refusal to fight in the army, were sent by the Government to live among some fierce Moslem tribes in the Caucasus, where it was supposed they must either fight or be massacred. They went on tilling the land as they had been used to do. The Moslems consulted what to do with them, and at last concluded, "These people are not Christians ; they won't fight. There is no Christianity in them, and they are not our enemies." So they let them alone.

† From *Our Testimony for Peace*, issued by London Yearly Meeting in 1912.

of some of the Jews in the days of the Maccabees, who were massacred by the Syrians because they would not defend themselves on the sabbath day.\* In reality it does not mean that we expect God to work miracles to save us trouble ; it means that we have some sight of, and belief in, the moral and spiritual laws through which He works in the world. We do not fanatically imagine that, if we kill our enemies six days in the week, God will intervene for us on the seventh ; but we do believe that if we persist in treating them with justice and goodwill they will not be our enemies and will not attack us. This faith has been justified in history, as will appear in the next chapter. I may add here that, in the Irish rebellion of 1798, the Friends in the disturbed districts of the island took no side, but treated both rebels and Government troops with kindness. Not one of them was killed, except one young man who had taken up arms ; and little injury was done to their property.†

(d) But Friends believe that this is not only true of a select body of persons within a nation. They are (as a body, whatever differences of view there may be among them,) prepared to extend the same principle to the people as a whole, and to believe that if *the nation* would act persistently in the same spirit towards all other nations it would need no other defence. This teaching ought to be given by the whole Christian Church, but it is not. It appears to be the special contribution that the Society of Friends has to make to the solution of the problem of abolishing war. Many people, Christians and others, are willing to admit that if all nations would agree to disarm themselves entirely, and trust to judicial methods of settling disputes as they arise, war need never begin. But

\* 1 Macc. ii. 29-41 ; compare 2 Macc. vi. 11.

† See *Christ and War*, pp. 96-98, and authorities there cited.

they think that any nation which disarmed itself in advance of the others would be destroyed. We may, I think, concede at once that such a policy would not be safe if it were the outcome of national self-interest : if it were dictated by the desire to escape the burdens of military and naval preparation, and so to get an advantage over other nations. But this is not the suggested motive. The Quaker faith is that if disarmament were carried out for the sake of Christian principle, and if it were preceded and accompanied by a course of practical justice and goodwill towards all other nations, it would yield a far higher security than fleets and armies, and would lead other nations on the same road. We believe that not even the German Government could induce its people to attack a nation that was known to the whole world to be harmless and the friend of all.

I believe myself that such disarmament is not a mere dream of what might be in the millennium, but that, if the nation were ready for it, it would be, after the present war is over, the most practical of all policies. I am however compelled to recognise that there is no probability that the nation will be convinced and ready to adopt it. But is it unreasonable to urge that there might be, and ought to be, an agreement for *mutual* disarmament, like the agreement between the United States and Britain in 1814, at the close of a long and bitter war, that the long Canadian frontier should be left unguarded? That was an act of true statesmanship and at the same time a sublime act of faith. Tremendous risks were run, but history has justified the faith. In face of repeated quarrels, the two countries have been preserved in a century of ever deepening peace.

We shall soon be at the parting of the ways. Shall the nations continue in the path of reliance on material security, which is rapidly leading them to destruction,



or shall they find salvation in a new venture of faith? I believe that the whole force of our Quaker witness ought to be exerted on the country to insist upon the higher way—and I venture to think that, if we have the courage to let our voice be heard, we shall have no little support from many of the soldiers who will be returning from the front—such of them as do return.

We are hearing much just now (January, 1917) of the need of exacting "guarantees" from the German Powers, to prevent the repetition of such a crime against humanity as the present war. Guarantees are certainly needed, but material securities will avail little. Even were the Allies eventually able, without destroying themselves, to compel the destruction of all German armaments, *the causes of war would remain*, in hatred, desire for vengeance, and mutual fear. The proposal is similar to the suggestion that crime might be abolished by shooting all criminals. The very act would create a new generation of them. Not by force can the causes of crime or war be done away. The only really effectual guarantee is the removal of fear; and this is only possible when the nations come to the point of agreeing to disarm. A League of Nations for the preservation of peace should have our heartiest support; but if it is based on the idea of *enforcing* peace it will almost certainly fail. It will try to stop the symptoms while leaving the disease uncured.

The conclusion, then, of our very imperfect study of the Quaker testimony for Peace is that we have a unique contribution, if only we have the knowledge and faith and courage to make it, to the solution of this sad world's sorest problem. That contribution is but an extension of the old prophetic message that "the work of righteousness shall be peace." What we have to learn and teach is that a nation which is willing to follow Christ in seeking the good of all men, and

refusing to treat them as enemies, will find them friends; that it will need no other defence than the laws of the spiritual universe, the protection of God Himself; that it need not wait for other nations to begin, but may find its highest honour in leading them in the path of mutual trust. "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places."\*

\* The great war is now over (July, 1919), and the Treaty of Peace with Germany has been signed and is awaiting ratification. A League of Nations has been embodied in it. Unhappily, the spirit that is expressed in the Treaty is not such as to afford much hope of the effective working of the League; and, though Germany is rendered powerless, there are no provisions for general disarmament.

## CHAPTER VIII

### QUAKERISM AND POLITICS

“ The difficulty for a true Christian to act consistently while engaged in political matters is no doubt very great. But this is not a sufficient ground for him to desert his post, if in the ordering of Providence he is placed in such a situation, so long, at least, as he can fill it without any compromise of religious principle. The other alternative leads to consequences which many who take it up do not, I believe, at first sight perceive ; for I think that, if carried out consistently, it must lead to a withdrawal from all active exertions for the amelioration of the miseries of mankind. . . . Indeed, it would leave the devil in undisputed possession of many things which vitally affect the prosperity of nations and the spiritual and temporal welfare of the whole human family.”—

JOSEPH STURGE (1839), from a letter to a Friend who had remonstrated with him for taking part in politics (*Memoirs*, p. 268).

THE general attitude of the Mystics towards the State and its concerns was one of aloofness. They were mainly concerned with the inward life and its expression, and with corruptions in the Church. They accepted the claims of the State on the individual, but often as a necessary evil. Many of them, like the Plymouth Brethren at the present day, regarded the State as purely an affair of “ this world,” with which the Christian as such should have nothing to do. In the Roman Empire, during the early centuries, it would hardly have been possible for a Christian to hold office under the Government without taking part in idolatrous or other heathen practices ; and both then and throughout the Middle Ages the Christian mystics felt themselves shut out from office by their general objection to war and oaths. Many of them protested against the Union of the Church with the State, and some

pleaded for the recognition by the State of freedom of conscience. "The heart," wrote William Dell, an Anglican mystic, in 1653, "cannot be forced by outward power, but by the inward efficacy of truth."\*

But, a monastic seclusion, in which the Christian would attend to his own communion with God, and "leave human wrongs to right themselves," was very far from the ideal of the early Quakers. They felt that they were out to "turn the world upside down." Their experience of the Inward Light, and their assurance that in some measure it shone in the souls of all men, if only they would attend to and obey it, raised all human life to a new dignity. They could not rest while human souls were oppressed and degraded by evil customs and unjust laws, which gave the "Seed" within them no chance to grow. Writing of George Fox, Rufus Jones says: "The burden of the mystery of evil in its many concrete forms was always upon his spirit; the heavy and weary weight of human wrongs in the world around him always oppressed him."† The wrong of man to man, especially under Governments called Christian, he could not leave unrebuked and unremoved. In 1672 he wrote to the Governor of Rhode Island, in words that might well be inscribed on the walls of every Parliament House:

*"Mind that of God within you. Stand for the good of your people. Take off all oppression; and set up justice over all."*‡

Quakerism was thus a more every-day and open-air religion than that of many of the mystics. The early Friends had their times of transport, their mounts of vision; but they knew that it rested with them to help in making a new world, according to the pattern shown them. The light that shone in their souls was

\* *Studies in Mystical Religion*, p. 491.

† See p. 158 and note.

‡ *Beginnings of Quakerism*, Introduction (by R. M. Jones), p. xliii.

for the whole world, and they must do their part in spreading it. They were always loyal citizens, and (as we have seen) entirely abjured the idea of trying to right human wrongs *by force*; but they were constant in their appeals to those in authority against the injustice to which they and others were subjected. George Fox very early protested to the judges against the monstrous penal system of his day.\*

Like many other mystics, they pleaded for the recognition by the State of Freedom of Conscience; and when the chance came to them they fearlessly put it into practice. In this country they had hardly any opportunity of moulding affairs of State themselves; but they were willing to take their share in the work of government if allowed to do so; and for this some of them had the qualification. In 1656 a letter of advice was sent out by an important "General Meeting" held at Balby, in Yorkshire (drawn up, perhaps, by William Dewsbury), containing very full counsel how Friends should conduct themselves in religious, business, and other affairs. It contains this noteworthy passage:

"That if any be called to serve the Commonwealth in any public service which is for the public wealth and good, with cheerfulness it be undertaken and in faithfulness discharged unto God, that therein ye may be patterns and examples in the thing that is righteous to them that are without."†

During the unsettled years when the Commonwealth Government was breaking up, Friends had considerable influence with Parliament. In 1659 they organized an important petition against "the oppression of Tithes," which was signed not only by their own adherents but by "many thousands of the

\* *Journal*, Vol. I., pp. 70, 71. See below, p. 164.

† *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 313.

free-born people of this commonwealth." It was presented to Parliament by three Friends, but affairs were too unsettled to get anything done.\* We noticed in the last chapter how in that year seven Friends were appointed at Bristol as Commissioners for the militia. Their policy, during that time of anarchy, was to keep clear (so far as possible) of party strife, and to concern themselves more with the principles than with the forms of government. When the Restoration came, they were soon again subjected to persecution; and by the time that religious liberty was recognised in the Toleration Act (1689), the period of Quietism in the Society in the country had already begun. But it is noteworthy that in 1698 a Friend, John Archdale, (of whom we shall hear more,) was elected to the British House of Commons as member of Chipping Wycombe; though, as he was unable for conscientious reasons to take the oath, he was refused the seat.†

### THE QUAKERS IN THE NEW WORLD.

In the Colonies across the Atlantic, Quakerism had far more chance to make itself felt as a moulding influence in public life; and to this field the minds of Friends very early turned. From 1656 to 1780 they increased rapidly in many of the Colonies. They quite expected to dominate the life of that western world; and at one time their expectation seemed possible of fulfilment. By 1750, there were more Quakers in America than in Britain; in some parts half the population were Friends. In Puritan Massachusetts and in aristocratic Virginia they were almost wholly excluded from office, but in several of the other Colonies they took a very influential part.

\* *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 458.

† *Quakerism in the American Colonies* (by Rufus M. Jones and others), pp. xiv., 349. It is from this source that most of the facts are taken which are set forth in the next section.

In *Rhode Island* Friends were in office for more than a century, the Governorship of the Colony having been held by them during thirty-six terms. The Quaker administrators were in frequent difficulty on the question of war, both against the Dutch and the Indians. Faced with orders from the Home Government to arm the Colony against the Dutch, and with the demand of the inhabitants (the majority of whom were not Friends) for protection against the Indians, they were constantly compelled to choose between giving up either their scruples or their office ; and as a rule they chose the former alternative—leaving the actual responsibility for the conduct of warlike measures as far as possible to others, and annulling them as soon as public opinion would permit. It was not a heroic policy, but the dilemma was of a kind that every conscientious man in public life is compelled to face. The pure idealist cannot always get his way ; indeed where freedom of conscience rules (and *Rhode Island* was founded on that principle\*), he has no right to force his own convictions, however sincerely held, on others who do not share them. If he is to continue to work with others who hold different views from his own, he cannot always escape from sharing responsibility for a course that he does not wholly approve. To the prophet this may seem to be a tampering with conscience ; but the world requires statesmen of principle as well as prophets.

*North and South Carolina* (separated in 1688, though still owned by the same proprietors), were in a state of great confusion when, in 1694, John Archdale was appointed by the proprietors, with the sanction of the British Government, as Governor of both Colonies. He had had previous colonial experience as agent for the Governor of Maine, and had become a Quaker,

\* See footnote, p. 145.

through the influence of Fox, on his return to England soon after 1670. About 1680 he purchased a share in the proprietorship of the Colony, and settled there—acting for a time with great success as deputy governor, before the division. On his appointment as Governor he left Thomas Harvey—probably also a Quaker—as his deputy in the north, while he himself went south to restore order. This he did with much skill, having a remarkable power of reconciling parties and getting them to work together. His policy towards the Indians was thoroughly enlightened: he insisted that they should be treated with friendship and justice, and prohibited the sale among them of strong liquor. He appears to have been one of the wisest and best of Colonial Governors, and shortly after his return to England, in 1697, his people showed their appreciation of his labours by enacting a law granting liberty of conscience. His administration, brief as it was, profoundly shaped the history of both the Carolinas, and it is a real misfortune that he was not permitted to make his influence felt in the British Parliament.

The Colony of *New Jersey* was formed by the union of the two Colonies of East and West Jersey in 1702. West Jersey had been purchased by two Friends in 1674, for the benefit of the Society, with the express purpose of showing how Quakerism would work when free from persecution; and within a few years many Friends had emigrated thither.\* East Jersey, in 1679, had also passed into the hands of Friends, and for a time Robert Barclay (the Apologist) held the post of Governor, though he never took up his residence there. After the union of the two Colonies, Quaker influence remained paramount for many years.

\* It is an interesting evidence of the feeling of many people against the Quakers, even in the Colonies, that in 1699 a census reports that of 832 Freeholders in West Jersey 266 were Quakers, the rest being described as "Christians"! (*Quakerism in Amer. Col.*, p. 377 note).



Samuel Jenings was Speaker of the Assembly ; there were several Quaker Governors ; and a number of the Judges were Friends. " Their staunch integrity," says Amelia M. Gummere (who writes the history of New Jersey in the book I am using), " and their courageous defence of their actions in everything that involved a sense of duty to the public, is beyond praise, and undoubtedly was an important factor in forming the government of the State upon present lines."

The story of *Pennsylvania* is better known than that of most of the other Colonies, but a brief account of its history, from the point of view of the part taken by Friends in its government, may be useful. William Penn had long had the dream of founding a settlement on the basis of entire freedom of conscience, which might be a refuge for Friends and other sufferers from religious persecution, and at last the opportunity was given him. He was, in spite of his Quakerism, *persona grata* at the Court of Charles II., and he had a claim on the Crown for a large sum that had been lent by his father, Admiral Penn. It was arranged that this should be paid him in the shape of a large tract of land about the Delaware river. He landed there in 1682, having previously sent a messenger to purchase portions of the land (as required) from the Indians, to receive the fealty of the few white settlers already there, and to lay out plans for a city. He himself was appointed by the Crown as Governor of the new Colony. His plans had been well advertised, and he was followed by many emigrants, who at first were mostly Friends. The Colony prospered, in spite of many difficulties caused by Penn's long absences in England, and the poor insight into character which led him to choose inferior men for Deputy Governors.

The first principle on which Penn endeavoured to found his Colony was that of liberty, both religious

and civil.\* His Constitution, more than that of any other Colony, became the model on which the United States Constitution was afterwards founded. Democratic institutions were introduced to the full, in order that, as Penn wrote to his friends, "I might leave myself and successors no power of doing mischief, that the will of one man may not hinder the good of a whole country."†

The second great principle was that of justice and goodwill to all men, especially to the Indian tribes who were being dispossessed of their land. Penn wrote to an Indian chief in 1681:

"This I will say, that the people who come with me are just, plain, and honest people, that *neither make war upon others, nor fear war from others, because they will be just.*"‡

This policy he and his Friends consistently practised. Other early settlers (though not all) had given compensation to the Indians for their lands; but Pennsylvania did it more liberally, and, in cases of dispute between tribes as to which were the lawful owners, it was sometimes paid to both. The result was that for the seventy years during which Friends governed, while in other Colonies raids and massacres were frequent, Pennsylvania was never once attacked, though practically without armed defence. The Indians recognised that the Quakers were their friends; and though towards the end of the period their loyalty

\* Rhode Island has the honour of having had, still earlier, a Government founded on liberty of conscience. The Colony was formed by the union of several settlements set up as early as 1640, by people who could not endure the despotism of Puritan Massachusetts, among whom Roger Williams is the best known. (*Quakerism in the American Colonies*, pp. 21, 220).

† 1681. Quoted on p. 53 of Isaac Sharpless's *Selections from the Works of William Penn*.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

was severely strained by unjust treatment, in which Friends had no share,\* the latter were able, by friendliness and voluntary gifts, to restore their confidence.

From 1682 to 1756 Friends controlled the Government of the Colony, though after about 1700 they were a minority of the population. The leaders of the Yearly Meeting were also the leading politicians.† Their chief difficulty was naturally that of military defence, which was demanded alike by the home Government and by many of the non-Friend colonists. They had to reconcile, as best they could, their principle of freedom of conscience with that of abjuring "carnal weapons." As in Rhode Island, their general policy was to leave any actual preparations for defence, when it became impossible to prevent them, to those who had no scruple on the matter. Penn himself admitted the desirability of having as Deputy-Governor a non-Friend who could "be stiff with our neighbours upon occasion"; but, as has been mentioned, he often chose the wrong man, and the method was not a great success. •

The golden age of Quaker government was from about 1710 (after Penn had finally left the Colony) to 1739, a period of peace. Pennsylvania was well

\* Especially by the trick known as the "Walking Purchase" (1737), by which William Penn's son Thomas, who was Governor but not a Friend, defrauded the Minisinks of a large stretch of land. (See the chapter "Friends and the Indians" in *Quakerism in Amer. Col.*, pp 495-508).

† "Most of the State leaders were ministers, and they seem to have drawn no definite line which would indicate that one side of their work was more religious or more secular than the other." (*Ibid.*, p. 479). John Kinsey, one of their ablest leaders, was for many years Speaker of the Assembly, Chief Justice, and Clerk of the Yearly Meeting (*Quakerism and Politics*, by Isaac Sharpless, p. 86)• For his celebrated controversy on Peace principles with Governor Thomas (1739), which contains many of the arguments on both sides that have been freely used, as if they were new, during the last few years, see ditto, pp. 111-139.

governed, and it throve greatly. Then, with the outbreak of war with Spain, difficulties thickened. The Governor (George Thomas) demanded money to defend the Colony, but the Quaker Assembly declined, and brought him to his knees by refusing to vote his salary. He wrote to England recommending that they should be made ineligible for office, and some of themselves began to suggest that their only consistent course would be to retire. War with France soon followed; and the Assembly fell into the practice of voting money "for the King's use," leaving others to decide what should be done with it. When they knew it would be applied for war purposes they would preface the appropriation by such a statement as this: "As the world is now situated, we do not condemn the use of arms by others, but are principled against it ourselves."

Yet, even during these years, when their views were in opposition to those of the greater portion of the electorate, their hold was such that they were re-elected. In 1747 Benjamin Franklin wrote of Friends as "that wealthy and powerful body of people who have governed our elections and filled almost every seat in the Assembly." But the end of the "Holy Experiment" was near. The French stirred up the Indian tribes, and, when Braddock was defeated at Fort Duquesne in 1755, the Indians were let loose on the frontier. The Governor declared war against them, and the Friends retired from the Assembly, in 1756. They had been advised to take this course by London Yearly Meeting, and it seemed to be the only way to keep their consciences clear. Yet still the "Quaker Party," under other leaders, remained the dominant influence in Pennsylvania until the War of Independence began in 1776; and it was still the party of liberty, devoted to the memory and to most of the principles of Penn.

After 1756 it gradually became a settled principle with Friends that they should keep out of political affairs. During the War of Independence their tendency to accept the *de facto* Government caused many of them to be regarded as pro-British, and they lost an influence which they never recovered. The practice of keeping aloof from politics was in harmony with the Quietism that had already settled down on the Society at large. It lost its sense of a world-mission, and became centred in itself—devoted to maintaining its own purity as the first object of its existence.

#### PENN'S EXAMPLE.

The career of William Penn, marred as it was with faults of timidity and imperfect judgment, is yet one that shows most instructively how the Quaker saint *can* bring his religion into public life and make it influence affairs of State for the well-being of a great community. He was a true statesman as well as a prophet of the Inward Light. He anticipated some of the principles of statesmanship that we are slowly learning, and others that the world has not learned yet. He thought out a "Plan for the Union of the American Colonies," which was probably the first suggestion of the movement that nearly a century later produced the United States. In 1693 he published a "Scheme for a European Dyet, Parliament, or Estates"—an idea which has had its faint beginnings of realisation in our Hague Conferences, and which, after this war is over, may develop into a League of Nations for preserving Peace. And above all his memory must be revered as the first statesman who had the faith and courage to make belief in the Inward Light in the souls of men the basic principle of the government of a great community.\*

\* See Sharpless, *Quakerism and Politics*, pp. 106-110.

## THE NINETEENTH CENTURY IN ENGLAND.

The attitude of the Society of Friends in England towards political matters, throughout the eighteenth century, was almost entirely one of aloofness. It was the great agitation against the Slave Trade and Slavery, itself the outcome (largely) of the Evangelical revival, that more than anything else drew Friends, near the close of the century, into some share in political life. But even in this great cause, though individual Friends took a leading part, the Society as a body showed at first but little interest, and it looked with some disfavour on their activities. Only gradually was it awakened to the importance of a corporate witness on the part of the Church on such a great moral and political question.

The first Friend to take his seat in the House of Commons was Joseph Pease, who was elected for South Durham in 1833, and was permitted to take an affirmation instead of the oath. That was the year of the great Emancipation Act, when Slavery in the British Colonies was nominally abolished, though years of further effort were needed before it was actually ended. John Bright entered Parliament in 1843, having already made his mark as a vigorous opponent of the Corn Laws.

One of the most instructive books that can be read on the right relation of Quakerism to politics is the *Memoirs of Joseph Sturge*, by Henry Richard, published in 1864. Starting in a small way in the corn trade, and meeting with many difficulties, he was yet able by his sterling integrity and sound judgment to build up a large business, in which he was joined by his brother Charles in 1822. In the same year he settled at Birmingham, with which city he was closely identified for the rest of his life. Both brothers were early converts to Total Abstinence from intoxicants, and they showed their Christian principle by refusing

to deal in malt, and afterwards in barley—sacrificing thereby a large part of their income.

Joseph Sturge threw himself with ardour into the civic life of his own town, and he worked indefatigably for Free Trade and the extension of the suffrage. To the scandal of some of his fellow-members in the Society of Friends, he became a prominent member of a Political Union for the promotion of Parliamentary Reform; vigorously defending his action against those who tried to show that it was inconsistent with Quaker principles to do so. But it was the cause of the Slaves that lay nearest to his heart, and to their entire emancipation he devoted the best years of his life. At no little personal risk—for his name was well known to the planters—he undertook a journey to the West Indies to collect evidence that, under the apprenticeship system, the very men who, in 1833, had received compensation to the extent of £20,000,000 for freeing their slaves were in many cases making their lot harder than ever. He revived the Anti-slavery associations when they fancied their work was done; and he had the joy of seeing the Colonial legislatures in 1838, after five years of efforts vainly made to persuade the British Government to interfere, voluntarily pass Acts declaring apprenticeship at an end and the slaves free. Lord Brougham's testimony to the part our Friend had played was that "Joseph Sturge won the game off his own bat."

In the Chartist agitations that followed, during the 'forties, Joseph Sturge still further challenged the conservative and quietist elements in the Society. While vigorously opposing the section that relied on physical force, he used his best endeavours to secure universal franchise for men. (Women's Suffrage at that time was, of course, hardly thought of). He championed the cause of popular liberties, and successfully resisted a Police Bill by which, after a riot in

Birmingham, the Government attempted to take the control of the police away from the local authority. He saved from execution a number of the rioters who had been condemned to death. He organized and addressed political meetings of working class people. At one of these he is reported to have spoken as follows :

"He felt that he would not be obeying the injunctions of his Divine Master, 'to love his neighbour as himself,' if he did not use any little influence which he might possess to prevent encroachments upon the liberties of his country, though they might not affect him personally ; and it was also his duty to advocate the rights of the poorest individual in the community to all the religious, civil and political privileges of the wealthiest in the land. . . . The severe censure cast upon the middle orders of society for their want of sympathy with the working classes, at some of the numerous meetings which had been held, had produced an effect which both concerned and alarmed him."\*

In 1842 he consented to stand for election to the House of Commons for the borough of Nottingham, on condition that he should not ask anyone to vote for him or "pay one sixpence towards securing his election." He was supported by the Chartists, and was within eighty-four votes of winning the election. His rival, Mr. Walter, of *The Times*, was unseated on petition, and the seat was offered to Joseph Sturge but declined. Later he was defeated at Birmingham, where he stood against both the recognised parties, and he never became a member of Parliament. The growing advocacy of physical force among the Chartists compelled him, though often known as "the Birmingham Quaker Chartist," to withdraw his

\* *Memoirs*, p. 265.



co-operation from that body ; but his influence upon the movement had been most salutary. Henry Vincent, the Chartist, wrote :

"It breathed, for the first time since the return of the Stuarts, a Christian principle into political action. . . . I was with him all through the Nottingham election. The moral effect of that contest was astonishing. In a town long accustomed to bribery, not a shilling was expended improperly ; order reigned, virtue was extolled ; the people for the time seemed as if they were swayed by an almost superhuman influence."\*

Other great political movements, in which moral and religious principles were concerned, found in him a warm and brave supporter—especially the Peace movement and the opposition to the Opium trade with China. He was one of three Friends appointed by the Meeting for Sufferings to interview the Emperor of Russia at the threatened outbreak of the Crimean War. Later, he and Thomas Harvey undertook a visit to Finland, where they arranged for the distribution of relief, to the extent of nearly £9,000, among those whose prosperity during the war had suffered wanton damage from a portion of the British fleet—thereby removing, to a large extent, the exasperation naturally felt among an unoffending people.

Such were a few of the labours, too little known in the present day, of a Friend who throughout his life did, in the humblest spirit, endeavour to live out his religion in public life. He was not gifted with eloquence, like John Bright, but they were men wholly united in spirit, and their careers are more instructive than many words on the subject we are considering. There was, indeed, one important political subject on which since their day we have gained further light

\* *Ibid.*, p. 329.

Devoted as both were to free trade, neither of them appears to have recognised the absolute necessity there was for the intervention of the State on behalf of the victims of industrial greed in factories and mines. Neither they nor any other Friends of note appear to have supported the efforts of Lord Shaftesbury and others to secure the protection of women and children by the Factory Acts. But of this we may be perfectly sure, that their apparent indifference to these appalling evils was not due to want of heart.\*

Their political activities were, as we have seen, distasteful to many Friends, and the official utterances of the Society at that time displayed uneasiness lest Friends should, by concerning themselves in such matters, be contaminated with the spirit of "the world," injure their own spiritual life, and spoil their service for the Church. It is such fears, engendered by the novelty of the appearance of Quakers on political platforms, that almost certainly produced the sentence which appears in our Book of Discipline under the heading "Subjection to Civil Government" :

" Whilst bound by our sense of religious conviction not to comply with those requisitions that violate our Christian principles, *we desire ever to be found amongst those who are ' quiet in the land.'* "†

The caution conveyed in these words no doubt has its place, and likewise another, against bitterness of party spirit. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that it is hard to live the Christian life amidst political clamour, hard also to avoid the danger of becoming so engrossed in strife that we cease to remember what we are striving for, and make party victory our main object instead of the good of our country and humanity.

\* See *The Life of John Bright*, by G. M. Trevelyan, pp. 154-159.

† *Christian Discipline*, Part II., p. 125.

There is a constant danger, in politics, of mistaking means for ends.

But, when this is admitted, we may be thankful that the Society of Friends is regaining something of the width of vision possessed by many of its early pioneers, that it now encourages its members to share the responsibilities of citizenship, and points out to them many fields of national and civic life in which men and women of Christian principle are sorely needed.\* One difficulty in conclusion may be briefly touched on.

It is almost impracticable for any person to work in politics *alone*. Progress can only be achieved, and wrongs removed, by the union of forces ; and he who would achieve anything must work with others. Especially if legislation is to be secured, the joint action of many is necessary. Hence great moral questions, involving the lives and happiness of millions of our fellow creatures, may become the special concern of one or other of the various political parties. We are often warned against identifying the Society with a party, in a way which implies that, if a question is "political," the Society as such should not touch it. To many of us this appears an impossible solution of what is certainly a difficult problem. Undoubtedly the Society must recognise freedom of conscience among its members, and leave them at liberty to work with any political party, or none, according as their sense of duty calls them. If, on any question such as we are considering they are seriously divided, it may be impossible for the Society to express a collective judgment. But this does not relieve it from responsibility for striving to find "the mind of Truth" on the matter. We dare not assert that, because a party has taken up a cause, Jesus Christ has dropped it as no longer His concern. Great questions like Slavery, the Opium Trade, the Drink Trade, our duties to other

\* *Ibid.*, pp. 126-128.

nations and to native races within our Empire, have at times become, and may at any time become, matters of party; and none the less it may be our bounden duty as a Society to witness for Truth in regard to them. The opposition of some members, who possibly may be allowing the interests of a party to obscure their vision of Truth, cannot be allowed to stand in the way.

Such a life as that of Joseph Sturge may help many to clearer light and deeper conviction on the possibility of working out our religious faith in the political sphere

## CHAPTER IX

### PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL REFORM

"The pioneer work of the Friends has been mainly this: that, in reviving forgotten or dimly apprehended truth, they daily applied it as the motive power of a community."—JOSHUA ROWNTREE, *Social Service, its Place in the Society of Friends*, p. 29.

"There is no great work of humanity and mercy in which the Quakers have not had their share, and which finally is not rooted in that which Fox recognised as the power of the 'Seed of God.'"—P. WERNLE, Introduction to German Edition of George Fox's *Journal*, 1908.

IN the last two chapters I have shown how the conviction of the Inward Light, as the "Seed of God" in all men, necessarily made the Friends opponents of War; and how it led them, when they had opportunity, to take their share in the responsible work of Government—though the difficulty of applying the principle in both directions at once, added to the growing influence of a mystic Quietism, caused them for generations to drop the latter, and hold themselves aloof from political life.

We have now to consider the consequences of their central principle, in the Social relations of life: that is, as regards the duties of man to man, and of classes to classes, within a community.

#### CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL RELATIONS.

One of the most noteworthy effects of Christianity was its broadening and deepening of the spirit of love to men. Jesus Christ, though He is not reported in the Synoptic Gospels as using the terminology of the

Inward Light,\* taught it by deeds if not by words. He ate with publicans and sinners, opened some of His deepest teaching to women, and taught that a kind act done to one of the least of His brethren is done to Him. He created, for the first time in human history, an intense consciousness of the worth of human personality, simply as human. Every man became for His followers a brother "for whom Christ died." The bonds of brotherhood were definitely enlarged to encircle all mankind. Love to man as man, the sense of the oneness of all humanity, became for the first time a guiding principle for ordinary men and women.

The evidence of this is seen in the refusal of early Christians to fight in the Roman armies, in the abolition of the gladiatorial games with their infamous cruelties, in the gradual suppression—without any formal prohibition—of slavery, in the growing recognition of woman's spiritual equality with men. There were, unhappily, counter influences. The Church became absorbed in fixing its creeds and settling its organization. The ascetic spirit, which is essentially self-regarding, attracted many of its most spiritually-minded members. Almsgiving came to be regarded as a penance and a discipline, of more value to the soul of the giver in the next world than to the recipient in this. Later, the Church too readily associated itself with Feudalism, whose division of men into classes of different intrinsic value seemed to many a Divine institution. And yet, all along, we see in the Church a real solicitude for (suffering humanity. A great ecclesiastic, Ambrose for example), compelled Theodosius the Emperor to do penance for his massacre of the Thessalonians. And all through the Middle Ages the Church strove, fitfully it may be and with only partial success, to regulate commerce and industry in the interests of justice and human welfare.

\* But note Luke xii. 57: "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Cf. John viii. 46.).

## GEORGE FOX AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE.

The Reformation in England broke up much of the structure of the ancient society—destroying especially the monasteries, where the destitute had been relieved; and this at a time when their number was fast increasing. The Elizabethan Poor Laws very imperfectly met the growing need. And so the days of George Fox's youth were times of acute suffering and oppression of the poor, little as most of the history books tell us about it. Fox found himself in a world where most of the professors of Christianity were accepting as natural and inevitable a state of things that gave the "Seed of God" in many human hearts but little chance to germinate. This his penetrating insight led him at once to perceive, and his loyalty to Christ drove him fearlessly to condemn.\* At Mansfield, as early as 1648, he went to the sitting of the justices, who were met (under the Statute of Apprentices) to fix the rate of wages in the district, exhorting them "not to oppress the servants in their wages, but to do that which was just and right to them."† (Winstanley, a contemporary of Fox, states that in some places poor people were forced to work for fourpence, fivepence, and sixpence per day, and that their earnings would not find bread for their families).‡ In the next year, he says, he warned "such as kept public-houses for entertainment, that they should not let people have more drink than would do them good."§ In Cornwall, in 1659, he protested publicly against the inhuman practice of "wrecking," exhorting everyone in case of

\* "I saw the harvest white, and the seed of God lying thick on the ground, as ever did wheat that was sown outwardly, and none to gather it; for this I mourned with tears."—Fox's *Journal*, I., p. 21.

† *Ibid.*, p. 27. He adds that he "exhorted the servants to do their duties and serve honestly."

‡ Rowntree, *Social Service*, p. 31.

§ *Journal*, I., p. 39.

a wreck to save men's lives and property, and do to others as they would that men should do to them.\* I have already noticed how he warned people in business against "cozening and cheating," and how the Friends were the first to adopt the method of fixed prices in shops.†

### "CHARITY" AND PHILANTHROPY.

From the first the Friends were extremely careful to relieve the necessities of their own poor. In 1660 "divers justices and captains" came to break up a great General Meeting at Skipton; but when they were shown the Friends' books, and saw the care taken to prevent their poor people from becoming a charge on the public, "they confessed we did their work, and passed away peaceably and lovingly."‡ After such meetings, Fox records, there would come perhaps "two hundred of the poor of other people; and Friends would send to the bakers for bread, and give everyone of these poor people a loaf, how many soever there were of them; for we were taught to do good unto all." Not many of the Friends seem to have perceived the evil consequences of indiscriminate "charity"; but, as we have seen, their root principles went much deeper than the gratification of a passing benevolent emotion. Some of them were led into a course of steady effort to remove the *causes* of distress and suffering: "charity" grew up into philanthropy. It is characteristic of what we call philanthropy to look further ahead than "charity" usually attempts to do; it deals not only with individual hardships, but seeks to elevate human life on a larger scale.

The association of philanthropy with Quakerism is no accident, but is a direct consequence of the

\* *Journal*, I., pp. 458-461.

† See above, p. 107.

‡ Fox's *Journal*, I. p. 470



intuition of the "Light" or "Seed" of God in all men. It was this, as we have seen, that led Penn and Archdale to deal justly with, and to trust, the Indians: the Colony of Pennsylvania, founded on liberty, justice and faith, was one of the greatest of philanthropic achievements. It was this that drew John Bellers, a younger contemporary of Penn, to plan and bring before Parliament schemes for Industrial Settlements for training the unemployed in useful labour, and to devise other measures of far-reaching social significance.\*

### NEGRO SLAVERY.

There is nothing that better illustrates the close connection of Quaker philanthropy with the belief in the Inward Light—and, at the same time, the very gradual enlightenment of the human conscience—than the work done by Friends in the matter of Slavery. When George Fox was in Barbadoes, in 1671, he exhorted Friends that had "blacks or negroes" to train them up in the fear of God, to deal with them gently and not cruelly, "as the manner of some hath been and is"; and "after certain years of servitude" to set them at liberty.† It is doubtful whether he perceived that Slavery in itself is wrong; but he manifestly thought of the blacks as sharing in some measure the gift of God's Light in their souls, which probably most white people in that day would have utterly denied—as, indeed, many still deny it. William Edmundson, who had been his companion, and who revisited Barbadoes in 1675, saw the matter more clearly. He was so vigorous in his remonstrances that he was brought before the Governor on a

\* Unfortunately the fame of Bellers is greater in Germany than in his own country. Marx (in *Capital*) describes him as "a veritable phenomenon in the history of Political Economy." See Rowntree, *Social Service*, pp. 48-54, 91-93.

† *Journal*, II., p. 149.

charge of inciting the negroes to rebel ; and later he addressed a remonstrance to Friends in Maryland and Virginia, testifying that the practice of slave-holding was not consistent with Christianity.\*

At that time, and far on into the eighteenth century, well-to-do professing Christians of all denominations (including Friends) in all the American Colonies saw nothing wrong in buying, selling, and holding negro slaves. The Friends were the first to have their eyes opened ; but their steps were feeble and halting. Long years elapsed before any Yearly Meeting gave a clear official pronouncement against Slavery. In 1714 the utmost that could be got from the respectable merchants and planters who composed a great part of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was the expression of a desire that " Friends generally do as much as may be to avoid buying such negroes as shall hereafter be brought in, *rather than offend any Friends who are against it* : yet this is only caution and not censure."†

A very few Friends, like Anthony Benezet, spoke and wrote against the practice. But it was not until the pure and loving soul of John Woolman took up the cause that much impression was made on the bulk of Friends in America. The deep conviction and marvellous tenderness and humility with which, in visiting Friends, he pleaded for justice, won the hearts of many whom nothing else had touched. The number of slaves held by members of the Society was very large ; in a single Quarterly Meeting we hear of a visit being paid to the owners of eleven hundred. In 1758 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for the first time agreed that all Friends who held

\* " This," says Whittier, " is one of the first emphatic and decided testimonies on record against negro slavery as incompatible with Christianity; if we except the Papal bulls of Urban and Leo the Tenth." (Introduction to John Woolman's *Journal*, Edition 1883, p. 8).

† *Ibid* pp. 8, 9.

slaves ought to "set them at liberty, making a Christian provision for them," and appointed John Woolman and three others to visit and treat with those who did not voluntarily do so. Persuasion was slow and difficult, and it was not till 1776 that the same Yearly Meeting gave orders that any Friends who persisted in holding slaves must be disowned. Other Yearly Meetings took the same course; and soon after the conclusion of the War of Independence (by 1784) Friends in America, even in Virginia, were clear of slave-holding. The Society has the honour of having been the first of the Christian bodies to clear itself of the stain.

In England, during the years that followed, Friends were among the chief supporters of Wilberforce and Clarkson in the long agitation which culminated in the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807, and in the further Act of 1833, which eventually abolished Slavery in British dominions. Yet even in this great cause the enthusiasm was that of individuals rather than of the Society as a whole, which shared too much the public opinion of the country. "At that period," says the biographer of Joseph Sturge, "nearly the whole power of the public press was bitterly hostile to the cause of abolition."\* London Yearly Meeting was distrustful of Friends mixing themselves up with political agitation; and still more was this fear felt in America, where there was also a dread of compromising the Society by co-operation with people of other religious denominations.†

The inconsistency of this position was so acutely felt by Joseph Sturge, that in 1841 he determined on a private visit to Friends in America, to stir them up in what he believed to be their duty. In this visit he was accompanied by John G. Whittier, the poet, who

\* *Memoirs of Joseph Sturge*, p. 95.

† *Ibid.*, p. 222.

had himself for a time abandoned a promising literary career, in order to throw himself heart and soul into the very unpopular cause of advocating the abolition of Slavery. They found some Friends open to receive their message; but Joseph Sturge's letters to his sister "prove to what an extent religious principle had become palsied by contact with slavery, even in that Society which was least under its influences, and how dangerous is the tendency to which all religious bodies are exposed of substituting zeal on behalf of the 'mint and anise and cummin' of sectarian forms for the weightier matters of the law, 'judgment, mercy, and faith.' "\* .

#### THE CARE OF THE INSANE.

Lack of space forbids our going further into the work of Friends in opposition to Slavery, and we turn to other fields of philanthropic service. Most people are unaware of the extraordinary change which the nineteenth century saw in the method of dealing with insane people. At the beginning of that period lunacy was regarded with wonder and horror, as a kind of bewitchment or diabolical possession; and the insane were treated with the utmost cruelty, and largely in secret. My father, Jonathan Grubb, once told me how, as a boy in the South of Ireland (about the year 1820), he accompanied someone who was allowed to visit a lunatic asylum, and how he saw the poor wretches chained in cages, like wild animals, almost naked, and with only filthy straw to lie upon. It was a Quaker tea-dealer, William Tuke, of York, who first determined by his own efforts to try more Christian methods. In 1792 he founded the Retreat at York, for the reception and care of insane people, and was

\* *Ibid*, p. 229. In writing to J. S. about the proposed visit, Whittier says that his work for the slaves has "destroyed all narrow sectarian prejudices, and made me willing to be *a man among men.*"

himself its first superintendent. He had the complaint treated as a disease, with rest and quiet, healthful and cheerful surroundings, kindness instead of cruelty, and no more compulsion than was absolutely necessary to prevent the patient from doing harm to himself or others. The result was that many were cured, and the fame of the Institution spread. It became the model lunatic asylum, and William Tuke's simple fidelity to the "concern" laid upon him gradually revolutionised the treatment of the insane throughout the civilised world.\*

#### PENAL REFORM.

The loathsome prisons in which so many of the Quaker pioneers were immured, and the barbarities of the criminal law in those days, were not taken by them to be matters of course. It was the sufferings of others, equally with their own, that led them to protest. George Fox records how, in 1650, during his imprisonment at Derby, he wrote to the judges "concerning their putting men to death for [stealing] cattle, and money, and small matters." He also laid before them "what a hurtful thing it was that prisoners should lie so long in jail; showing how they learned wickedness one of another in talking of their bad deeds; and therefore speedy justice should be done."† Such protests fell for the most part on deaf ears, and the prisons remained sinks of corruption, physically and morally. John Howard, the great prison reformer of the eighteenth century, was not a Quaker; but he was greatly assisted in his schemes for improvement in arrangements and hygiene by a Friend, Dr. John

\* See essay on Samuel Tuke (grandson of William Tuke) in *John S. Rowntree, his Life and Work*, pp. 405-409. It is mentioned there that a Frenchman, M. Pinel, had begun to work on similar lines rather earlier than W. Tuke, but neither then knew what the other was doing.

† *Journal*, I., pp. 70, 71.

Fothergill.\* The amelioration which resulted, in this country at least, was only temporary; and when in 1813 the attention of Elizabeth Fry was called by Stephen Grellet to the wretched condition of the female prisoners in Newgate, things were as bad as they had ever been.

The work of Elizabeth Fry is known all over the world, and we have not space for details here. It is from her truly Christlike and successful efforts on behalf of some of the most degraded and apparently hopeless specimens of the human race that there have sprung most of the reforms in prison administration that have spread through all civilised countries. Some part in this ameliorative work has been taken by the Howard Association (named after John Howard), which was founded in 1866, by a Friend, William Tallack, and which is still largely supported by Friends.

#### PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL REFORM.†

Philanthropy may be described as the outcome of the charitable impulse, under the discipline of reflective thought, in a strongly individualised society: that is, in a community in which ideals of personal liberty make a strong appeal to the average person; and where it is to private effort, on the part of individuals or voluntary associations, that people mainly look for the redressing of grievous wrongs, rather than to a central authority like State or Church. But philanthropy, excellent as it is, has obvious limitations. The efforts of individuals, alone or in co-operation with one another, are often found to fail: their field of work is too small, the necessary funds are not forthcoming, and an element of compulsion is often needed which the State alone can supply. The object aimed

\* Rowntree, *Social Service*, p. 80. See also *John Fothergill and his Friends*, by R. Hingston Fox, pp. 223 f.

† Some sentences in this section and the next are from an article on "Philanthropy" (by the present writer) in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.

at can only be adequately secured through changes in the law, and through improved administration of the forces of society. So the Philanthropist becomes the Reformer : the opponents of Slavery, for example, could not be satisfied, like John Woolman, with persuasion ; they must have the system made illegal. The abolition of the Corn Laws, which pressed so terribly on the poor, and the control of the abuses of competition in factories and mines, whereby the lives of women and children were degraded, could only be secured in the political field.

The case of penal administration, which we have been briefly considering, well illustrates the transition from philanthropy to social reform, and also the lasting need of both kinds of effort. Up to the time of John Howard's reforms, the State took practically no responsibility for the management of prisons : it simply handed over a criminal for a term of punishment to a jailer, who got what he could out of the prisoner and his friends. The monstrous abuses to which this gave rise claimed the attention of philanthropists like John Howard and Elizabeth Fry. But they found that the abuses could only be removed if the State were brought to recognise that it had other duties to the offender than simply punishing him. If this is all it thinks of, he comes out of prison more degraded, and a greater danger to society, than when he went in. It is more and more clearly understood that the State must not only place him in wholesome conditions and see that he is treated humanely,—a thing it can do ; but that it must endeavour if possible to *reform* him—a thing that a State machine is almost powerless to do. The work of changing a bad will into a good will, and making a man who feels that society is his enemy into a good citizen, is *personal* work and beyond the power of any machine, however perfect. It can only be done by persons who have his

good deeply at heart. And so in the most enlightened communities, particularly in some of the American States, the Government makes large use of the philanthropic efforts of men and women who are devoted to this task—as probation officers, prison visitors, and so forth. State officials, whether prison governors, warders, or chaplains, *may* of course have the needed qualifications; but in practice this is quite exceptional.

This indicates how reforms secured through political action may still require the efforts of philanthropists to yield the desired results. And in many cases there are advantages in experiments at reform being made by private individuals before the State steps in. William Tuke would have found his way blocked for reforming the treatment of lunatics had all asylums been under the State; for almost everyone then took for granted that insane people must be kept in bondage, and no State department would have been likely to try so dangerous an experiment as dispensing with coercion. If all reformatories for boys who break the law had been managed by the State in days when handcuffs and armed guards were thought necessary for order and discipline, it is not likely that even the moderate success would have been possible which has been achieved by such institutions under private management. It is only through the free play of personal influence that an appeal can be made to the Light which shines potentially in the souls of the most apparently degraded, and that their personality can be restored and developed in the right directions.

### SOCIALISM.

It may seem that we are wandering away from our subject, which is the position and work of the Society of Friends in relation to the claims of social duty; but I do not think that this matter can be properly understood without taking into account some of these more



general considerations. In recent years our members, in common with other people both within and without the Christian churches, have had their thoughts directed to the whole basis on which our present political and economic structure rests, and to the question whether such evils as the philanthropist sets out to cure are not the necessary outcome of causes he generally fails to recognise—of a radical injustice at the very heart of existing society. Let me lead up to this by continuing for a moment more our consideration of Penal Reform. If the State is compelled—as we have seen it is—even in the interests of the community, to care for the lives of those who break its laws ; to try to influence their characters for good, to put them under the care of probation officers when prison is likely only to do them harm, to start them in life again under good auspices when they come out of prison (as it does to some extent in England under recent penal regulations, and still more in some of the American States) ; *can it stop there ?* Is it right that all this trouble should be spent, and all these opportunities provided, for the few who break the laws, while vast numbers of the poor who keep the laws are left to shift for themselves, and to sink or swim as best they may in the surging sea of competition, where for long periods many of them may be unable to find the means of living ? Must not the process end logically in the State extending a similar or greater care to all its members who find it hard to survive in the competitive struggle—guaranteeing them at least the certainty of employment ?

The extreme difficulty of a recognition by the State of a “right to work” (at proper wages) in a community that is in the main competitive, and the constant failures of such attempts when made, have often been pointed out by economists. Into this discussion I cannot enter ; but the difficulties appear to me quite insuperable. The demand for the “right

to work " could only, I believe, be safely granted (if at all) in a Socialistic State, in which the competition of individuals and of groups is abolished by making all land and capital the property of the community as a whole.

Many other considerations point towards the same conclusion. The old individualist order of the seventeenth century, under which it was usually possible for persons to employ themselves in business in a small way, if they could not find employment that suited them, has long passed away. Since the Industrial Revolution, nearly all business is conducted on an ever vaster scale, with great capital owned by large firms, companies and syndicates. Industry has become a huge machine, in which the individual must take his place, and do largely as others do, or fall out and cease to work. The demand that he shall regulate his conduct in such a machine on truly Christian principles seems to many totally impracticable. He is not free to choose his own course, or to treat others in all cases as his conscience would direct. Particularly the great mass of the employed are less and less able to choose or determine the conditions of their work; they are more and more at the mercy of economic forces over which they have no control. Hence it is urged with force that they must regain freedom by acquiring collectively the ownership of the means of production, and the power to direct their own labours.

Friends have recently been brought to face these questions by the pressure of the great war. In 1915 the Yearly Meeting appointed a "Committee on War and the Social Order," whose chief function was to study and elucidate the causes of war, in so far as these may be found in the conditions of social and industrial life. The Committee, like the Society generally, finds itself much divided in opinion. While there is a large measure of agreement that the spirit

of competition in business has much in common with the spirit that leads to war, and that many wars are the direct result of the profit-making impulse which seeks gain through injury to competitors, some would go further—and urge that the only cure for war is to abolish profit-making and competition entirely, and to found our whole industrial life on a co-operative basis. Such members of the Committee have little patience with the efforts of others to show how Friends may remove, or at least diminish, the causes of war by individual and concerted measures—such as endeavours after a higher personal morality in business, the introduction of profit-sharing, the cultivation of greater simplicity of life, the founding of co-operative colonies, and so forth. These things seem like applying a plaster to the surface while the root disease remains, and schemes of this kind are even deprecated in so far as they withdraw attention and effort from the main problem.

The discussion is a vital one, and it demands the dedication of our best powers of mind and heart and will, if we are to find the way in which as a Society we may truly “walk in the Light.” It must not be shirked, or treated as a matter purely political or “secular,” beneath the level of a spiritual and Christian Society. I do not myself think that agreement will soon be reached, but light will come as we prayerfully seek for it together. I have stated as briefly and clearly as I can some of the arguments that make for Socialism; and I think it right to balance these by indicating with equal brevity some reasons on the other side. I believe the Society, as a body, will not readily commit itself to a Socialistic programme as the only means by which human society can liberate itself from the dead weight of those gigantic forces that hinder the free working of the Spirit of God.

The Society of Friends was cradled and brought up in

Individualism—not the selfish individualism that seeks its own gain, even at the cost of another's loss—but the individualism of the spirit that finds its own way under some sense of direct guidance from God. We have seen\* how this needed to be checked and tempered by the guidance of the fellowship of the body, lest it should degenerate into mere anarchy. It is not always easy to harmonise personal with collective guidance in a religious body holding a common faith; it will be much harder when the collective guidance is that of the whole community, representing many forms of religion and none at all. And certainly the progress of Socialism must mean more and more the control of the individual's actions by the community. If we take the ideal of State Socialism, in which the whole nation becomes a co-operative society, organized on the basis of "production for use," it seems perfectly clear that people will not be able to choose freely both what they will consume and what they will produce. At one or other end there must be regulation; and it is likely that consumption would be left free and production regulated to meet the resulting demand. The nation would become a great co-operative society of *consumers*, and the State would set people to the work that needed doing. How this would be reconciled with the sense of personal vocation which every true Friend ought to have in the work he undertakes, it is hard indeed to see.

Many of the younger Socialists are already in revolt against the threatened omnipotence of the State. Their ideal is that the people as *producers* should organize themselves in Guilds, one for each great industry, of which the existing Trade Unions might form the beginning; and that each Guild should have control of the methods and conditions of work in a particular industry. Who would then decide *what* is to be pro-

\* See above, p. 93.

duced, or whether the people as consumers would have to be content with what the Guilds offer them, has not been made clear. But even in a Trade Union the inward conflict is often severe for a religious man who has to reconcile the duty he owes to his mates with the duty he owes to his God.

This I think may show that Socialism as yet offers no such *clear alternative* to the present "system," evil as that admittedly is, as was presented in the case of Slavery. There an owner must either free his slaves voluntarily, or be compelled to do so by the law. Nor is there any *clear moral issue*, as there was in the conviction that no man has a right to hold other human beings as property, to make them simply means to his own ends. For, immeasurably bad as are many of the fruits of competition, it can hardly be said that private property and free enterprise, on which competition rests, are things wrong in themselves. A great part of the fundamental industry of the world, even in the most progressive countries—that is, agriculture—is still carried on by small owners, for it is found that in this way the best return is got from particular plots of land. It is where land or capital is aggregated in great masses, in the hands of a few, that the terrible evils of competition begin to appear.

All this shows that we are still groping for light on these great questions, and that it would be a disaster for a religious body like the Society of Friends to tie itself to a political programme which may turn out to have been wrongly conceived. For the present we must be prepared to differ, in the confident assurance that as we humbly and prayerfully seek for light, and strive resolutely to use whatever light we have, in the spirit of George Fox and William Penn and John Woolman and Joseph Sturge, we shall together learn more of the will of God.

## CHAPTER X

### FRIENDS AND EDUCATION

"Our characteristic spiritual principles prevent our having any class set apart for the functions which in other denominations the ministry is trained and paid to perform. In our ideal, not only does every member of the Society belong to the spiritual order, but he or she may be called by the Divine choice to assume any spiritual function whatever. Hence it is absolutely necessary that our rank and file should have the opportunities for that careful training and culture which ministers to large views, just judgments, and wide sympathies. It is a plain fact that we must have a higher quality in the ordinary member than other bodies need."—ANNE WAKEFIELD RICHARDSON, address to London Yearly Meeting, 1906.

GEORGE FOX was a man whose schooling appears to have been neglected. He never wrote much with his own hand; and when he did his spelling was marvellous, even in those spacious days of freedom. But he very soon discovered the need for education among Friends if the work they had in hand was to prosper; and he was before his time in perceiving that it was as necessary for girls as for boys. In his Journal, under date 1668, he records how he established at Waltham, in Hertfordshire, a school for the teaching of children, "and ordered the women's school to be set up [at Shacklewell] to instruct young lasses and maidens in whatsoever things were civil and useful in the creation"\*—a large order for the women teachers of those days. His enlightened views about education may be judged by his maxim, "Discourage nothing in your children but evil, neither correct them in your own will," and by the fact that in America he sought to leave for the special benefit of the children of Philadelphia a

\* *Cambridge Journal*, II., p. 119. The statement that the girls' school was at Shacklewell is from the Ellwood Edition, Vol. II., p. 89, where it is also said that the Waltham School was for boys.

piece of land to include a botanical garden and a playground.\* The early records of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings show that the first generation of Friends were alive to the need of education and apprenticeship for their children, "that none," as one such record says, "live idle in the creation."† It is known that in 1671 there were more than fifteen boarding-schools kept by Friends—some of whom, both then and after the Toleration Act of 1689, suffered fines or imprisonment, for keeping schools without a bishop's licence.‡ Some of these men were able schoolmasters who had enjoyed a college education; but most of them died before the eighteenth century was far advanced, and the Society began to suffer sadly from the want of schools and teachers. Between 1700 and 1740 London Yearly Meeting pressed the need of education on its members no less than twenty-seven times.§

That, however, was a period of spiritual deadness within as well as without the Society of Friends; and it proved extremely hard for the few members who saw the need to arouse the Society from its apathy, or to get them to provide any funds for education. In part this was due to the one-sided application of the principle of the Inward Light to which I have already alluded: the human side was neglected, and it was too much assumed that the Spirit of God could work in an unfurnished mind as well as, or better than, in one that was trained. There is, I think, no doubt that it is very largely to the want of education that we must attribute the grievous decline of the Society during the eighteenth century. It was not sufficiently recognised that many of the early leaders were men of broad and

\* Rowntree, *Social Service*, p. 23.

† *Ibid.*, p. 46.

‡ *Cambridge Journal*, II., p. 409. Also Brayshaw, *Spiritual Ideals of Education*, pp. 22, 23.

§ J. S. Rowntree, *Life and Work*, p. 301.

liberal culture before they became Friends; and no provision was made for securing a succession of such leaders.

### QUAKER BOARDING SCHOOLS.

It was not until 1779, after many efforts had been made by the Yearly Meeting to secure provision for education and the training of teachers, that Dr. John Fothergill was able to arouse the Society sufficiently to achieve the founding of Ackworth School. A disused Foundling Asylum, with about eighty-four acres of land, was purchased for £7,000, and adapted for the "guarded and religious education" of 300 boys and girls, the children of Friends "not in affluence."\* The terms were fixed at £8 8s. a year for board, clothing, and education. Parents sent their children from all over the country; and, as till 1847 there were no vacations, they parted with them for the whole of their school life.

Since that time fourteen other Boarding Schools have been set up, under the care of Quaker Committees, in Great Britain and Ireland (including Saffron Walden, but not including schools conducted by private individuals).† Ackworth and Leighton Park are directly under the Yearly Meeting; the others have mostly been established by local groups of

\* See *John Fothergill and his Friends*, by R. H. Fox, ch. xxii. The best account yet written of Quaker education in the eighteenth century is to be found in *Five Papers* by Samuel Tuke (1838-1842), printed, together with other valuable papers, in *Education in the Society of Friends* (1871). Ackworth was preceded by a school for London Friends' children at Clerkenwell, (opened early in the eighteenth century, under the influence of John Bellers's schemes), which was afterwards removed to Croydon and thence later to Saffron Walden.

† The distribution of the schools is as follows:

North of England, 7: Ackworth, York (2), Rawdon, Ayton, Penketh, Wigton.

South of England, 4: Saffron Walden, Leighton Park (Reading), Sibford, Sidcot.

Ireland, 4: Lisburn and Brookfield (north), Mountmellick (central, for girls), Waterford (boys).



Friends, such as Quarterly Meetings, singly or in conjunction with others. The result of this rather haphazard procedure is that there has been a lack of co-ordination between the schools, and of a settled educational policy in the Society as a whole. Each Committee has honestly done its best to promote the success of its own school, without much regard to what was being done by others. As in the case of Ackworth, most of the schools were originally intended to help the education of the poorer members of the Society; but in the natural and wholly laudable desire to make them efficient—and efficiency is essential if they are to keep abreast of progress in national education—the fees, though they vary, have been gradually raised to figures that even with the help of bursaries are for the most part beyond the range of a working-class income. The two schools at York (Bootham and the Mount, for boys and girls respectively), and the more recently-founded school at Leighton Park, Reading (about 1890), are designed to give a training capable of leading on to the Universities.

### QUAKER IDEALS.

Before dealing with the efforts that have recently been made to put our education on a sounder basis, it may be well to try to indicate the kind of ideal with which these schools have been founded and carried on. From the first, the aim has been much more religious than purely utilitarian. The thought was to provide schools with a definitely Quaker "atmosphere," in which boys and girls would grow up into some measure of understanding of the Quaker way of life, and receive a training that would prepare them as men and women to share in the work of the Society. I do not think it would be fair to characterize this aim as being merely "sectarian," or to urge that the proper place for Quaker training is in the home. Of course it is, and

no school, however good, can compensate for a bad or neglectful home ; but it is found in practice that in the majority of cases something more than home influences are needed. If boys and girls at the most impressionable age are sent even from the best of Quaker homes to day-schools in which there is little religious life, or into boarding-schools where the religious influence is quite alien to that of the home, the Quaker character is not easily developed. This is obvious in the case of schools for boys where an important feature is made of military training. Of course no absolute statement can be made, for human characters vary greatly, and doubtless cases could be shown in which some of the most useful Friends have never attended a Quaker school. But, speaking broadly, the demand for Quaker education has been for something essential to our life as a Society, and has not been due to mistaken narrowness of view.

Purely denominational teaching has not as a rule taken a large place in the work of the schools: many Friends, looking back on their school days, have often wished that more had been done for them in this way. In the early days of Ackworth even Biblical teaching was largely neglected, apparently under the idea that if children were shielded from evil, and trained to look to an unseen Guide, their needs would be supplied from the Divine source. When in 1816 the school was visited by Joseph John Gurney (brother of Elizabeth Fry), he found the children sadly ignorant of Scripture, and he wrote to the Superintendent: "I am of opinion that the minds of the boys are not properly cultivated on the subject of religion. They are remarkably sheltered from evil, but do not appear to me to be positively led to good."\* Since his time, Biblical teaching has received far more attention in all our schools than before. The association of boys and

\*Quoted in *J. S. Rowntree*, p. 311.

girls under the same roof has been on the whole a valuable feature of most of the schools, though only at a few of them has much been done in the way of co-education, and that in recent years. Where it has been adopted it has generally been regarded as a successful innovation.

The curriculum followed in most of the schools does not differ greatly, I believe, from that of most good secondary schools of the modern type. But the Friends' schools were in advance of others in the attention given to the teaching of Science—though it is only in recent years that appliances have been provided for laboratory work on the part of the pupils themselves. In several of the schools the pupils work towards the London Matriculation or some similar examination; and Leighton Park and Bootham (York) prepare boys for Oxford or Cambridge. I believe that more thought is given than is usual in schools to the need of training in Citizenship—that both boys and girls may be prepared to take useful places, not only in the Society of Friends, but in the work of the community at large. History teaching, in capable hands, may be directed towards this end; and in some cases lessons on elementary Economics have been given with good results, and the pupils have been interested in particular pieces of social work in the neighbourhood of the school or elsewhere. Such preparation for social service would seem specially appropriate in schools whose managers are unable, on principle, to admit cadet corps or military drill, or to encourage “patriotism” of the flamboyant type.

#### LEISURE TIME PURSUITS.

One of the most wholesome features of the schools, and one in which pioneer work has been done by Friends, is in the employment of leisure time. Not only has the problem of “loafing” among boys in boarding-

schools been largely overcome in a natural and healthy way. Beyond this, permanent interests for later life have been developed by "Natural History Societies" and the like among the pupils, by which, often with the help of their teachers, they have been put in the way of employing themselves in making collections of natural objects, keeping diaries of observations, studying the geology and the archæology of the district, making things in the workshop, and so forth. Personally, I owe more than I can say to the fact that, when I was at school at Bootham (1868-1871), I happened to become interested in the observatory, where we had the use of a good equatorial telescope, an astronomical clock, a transit-instrument and a micrometer, which I learnt to use. For two years the greater part of my leisure time was occupied in the study of astronomy; and, though I have not been able to any great extent to keep it up, it has influenced the rest of my life for good. On the whole I cannot doubt that the practice of the Friends' schools has made a real contribution to broad and sound ideas of education, mental, moral, and physical. Games, of course, have not been neglected, but they have received a reasonable and not an excessive share of attention; and the difficult question of "compulsory athletics" has hardly arisen. The Society has produced more than its share of men distinguished in Science: John Dalton, William Allen, Thomas Young, Jonathan Hutchinson, Silvanus P. Thompson, and many more; and both men and women among Friends have as a rule been more keenly interested in, and better informed about, the world of nature than is usual among people of a similar grade of education. Though not connected with the subject of Friends' schools, it is worth noting that so early as 1738 a Quaker minister, Thomas Story, during a ramble along the shore under the cliffs at Scarborough, hit upon the idea that the rocks had been gradually

formed by deposits under water—"a discovery of stratified geology one hundred years before its time"—and that the process had taken much longer than was possible according to the accepted views about Creation.\*

### SOME UNSOLVED PROBLEMS.

How far are the schools fulfilling their purpose? Most of them, as has been mentioned, were founded to assist the education of the poorer members of the Society; but in order to pay their way they are compelled to charge fees which most of these members cannot pay. Further, the accessions of membership which the Society has received during the last fifty years (largely through the Mission Work which will be touched on in the next chapter) have been drawn to a considerable extent\* from the wage-earning or small shop-keeping class, who can get a fair general education for their children from the schools of the nation, either free or at a comparatively small charge. It is clear, therefore, that the people for whom most of the schools were intended do not actually make much use of them. And, further, the provision made by the schools is far in excess of the number of Friends' children whose parents are able or willing to use them. The number of places for boarders in the eleven English schools was, in 1915, 1,310; the average number of children in the schools (excluding day-scholars) was 1,224. Of these only 686 (that is, 56 per cent.) were Friends,† and 538 (44 per cent.) were unconnected with the Society. The percentage of non-Friend children has increased from 22 in 1882 to 44 in 1915.‡

\* Rowntree, *Social Service*, p. 17.

† The word is used to include children who are being brought up as Friends, whether members by birth or not. The figures are taken from the Minutes and Proceedings of London Yearly Meeting, 1916.

‡ The percentage of non-Friend children ranges from 19 at Sibford to 70 at Ayton.

This does not mean that the children of Friends are being deliberately kept out of the schools. They *may* be admitted, by the help of bursaries and otherwise, at comparatively low rates; and the only way in which the schools are able to pay their way is by the admission of non-Friends, when places are vacant, at rates that are above cost. At Ackworth, for instance, the average cost per child is now nearly £50 a year, of which about £7 is met from subscriptions and endowments. Friends' children may be admitted for as little as £18 a year, while non-Friends have to pay £54. The fact that nearly half the children in the schools are not likely to be brought up as Friends has led, in recent years, to many searchings of heart. Whatever the advantage to them may be of the education they receive, it was not for this kind of mission work that the schools were founded; and, further, the work for which the money *was* (for the most part) given is being very imperfectly done. It is certain that a large majority of the children born to Friends are not receiving a Quaker education, except in so far as their homes are able to give it.\*

\* In 1901 a return from the Monthly Meetings as to the children between the ages of 5 and 15 gave the following results:

A. Children who are members	..	..	..	..	1,846
B. Children not members, but one or both of whose parents are members	..	..	..	..	1,161

As the return covers ten years of life, we may assume that if we divide these figures by ten and multiply by 7 we shall obtain approximately the number of children aged from 10 to 17 (which is roughly boarding school age):

A. 1,288. B. 812. Total 2,100.

From 1900 to 1915 the membership of the Society increased from 17,346 to 20,007, or 15 per cent.; and if the children increased in the same proportion we have:

Children of Friends	..	..	..	..	2,415
Children at boarding schools	, ..	..	..	..	686

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Not at boarding-schools	..	..	..	..	1,729
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(The figure 1,729 represents roughly the children who at a given

And for this majority the Society has felt only a slight responsibility. It was one of the chief concerns of the late John Stephenson Rowntree to bring this responsibility home to Friends.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the plea has been raised that some of the schools, especially in the north, should be closed, and the endowments more wisely used ; and also that the whole problem of education should be taken in hand and put on a sound footing. The main difficulty is, as I have shown above, that the schools (except Ackworth) are locally owned and are subject to no central control. Unless the different Quarterly Meetings can agree upon a common policy, it is not easy to see how progress can be made.

#### THE CENTRAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

With a view to helping in the solution of these and other problems, and specially to extend the care of the Society, so far as possible, to *all* the children of Friends, the " Central Education Committee " was appointed by the Yearly Meeting of 1902. Among its functions were to be :

To afford assistance to schools by visitation, advice as to books, apparatus, methods, and work generally.

To promote the right choice and training of Friends for the teaching profession.

To give practical attention to the educational needs (especially to the religious education) of the children of members and attenders who are not educated at the boarding-schools, both during and after their school life.

moment are not receiving a Quaker education. Of these a certain proportion, difficult to estimate, would probably attend a Friends' School for two or three years out of the seven). See note at the end of this chapter.

A salaried Secretary was appointed, and a provision of £500 per annum was (with some difficulty) obtained from the funds of the Society. The rest of the expenses of the Committee (amounting at present to some £1,000 a year) have to be raised by subscriptions. The Committee has done excellent work, in helping the boarding-schools to become more efficient, in improving the position of the teachers,\* and in caring for the religious education of the children of Friends who are not sent to the boarding-schools. In 1905 an investigation into the schools of the Society was made by Mr. J. W. Headlam, and on the basis of his report to the Board of Education the Committee recommended that the schools should, as far as possible, be arranged under three types :

- A. Schools offering a three-years course for children aged 12-15.
- B. Schools with a leaving age of 16 or 17, preparing for Matriculation, etc., with a view to commercial or professional life.
- C. Schools with a leaving age of 18 or 19, preparing for a university career.

With this in view, Sibford school was re-constituted as a "handicraft boarding-school" for children who would leave at about fifteen, and scholarships were provided which would place its advantages within the range of working-class incomes, if Friends wished to avail themselves of them. These scholarships have been well used, and the school is doing very good work. Rawdon has been to some extent re-organized on similar lines. Penketh, Ayton and Wigton are not prepared to conform exactly to any of the three standards, but hold a position between A. and B. Ackworth, Sidcot and Saffron Walden have adopted type B., and Bootham, the Mount and Leighton Park are in the main of type C. A system of transference scholarships has been introduced, whereby a few promising pupils

\* A very careful scheme for retiring pensions for teachers has been put on a sound footing, and a large sum raised for the provision of scholarships for the training of women teachers.



can begin in a school of lower grade and pass on into a higher. The central problem, however, of extending the advantages of a Quaker education to all the children of Friends has not been met, and no solution is yet in sight.\*

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR ADULTS.

The need for a higher standard of religious knowledge among all our members, especially from the point of view of the vocal ministry in our meetings, has during the last thirty years been much before the minds of Friends, especially the late John Wilhelm Rowntree. It was largely through his enthusiastic exertions that the "Summer School" movement was set going among Friends in this country. Friends are invited to gather for a week or more in some attractive place during the summer holidays for social intercourse, recreation, and devotional fellowship; and instruction is provided by means of connected lectures on Biblical, religious and social subjects. The first of these gatherings was held at Scarborough in 1897, and many have been arranged since that time, in various parts of the country. Local courses of lectures, at week-end gatherings and otherwise, have also been extensively used. A further step was taken in 1903 by the opening of the Woodbrooke Settlement for religious and social study, of which Dr. Rendel Harris was till 1916 the Director of Studies. This institution is unique in offering to persons of both sexes courses of training in Biblical and Quaker history, theology, and social economics; and it has usually been well attended by young men and women from England and America, and also (before the war) from various Continental countries, particularly Holland and Norway. It is difficult to foresee how much this may mean in the future for the diffusion of the Quaker view and way of life. Since the

\* See note at the end of this chapter.

war began, facilities have been offered at Woodbrooke for the study, under competent instruction, of the Quaker peace testimony, and its application in international relations.

### QUAKER COLLEGES.

Woodbrooke is the only Quaker institution in this country that can be called a College—if we except the Dalton Hall, at Manchester, for men who are studying at Manchester University. In America, however, denominational Colleges form a remarkable feature of Quaker life: most of the larger Yearly Meetings have Colleges for young men and women after they have left school, and a great part of the young people take advantage of these institutions, which undoubtedly have a strong influence on their later lives. In addition, Haverford College (in Pennsylvania) attracts young men from many of the States; and Bryn Mawr College, for young women, was founded by Friends and is under their care. Both these institutions provide a first-class education of University type. At Bryn Mawr the majority of the professors and students are not Friends, and the aim of the College is in no sense denominational. The interest taken in education by Friends in America, and the amount of money they are willing to devote to this purpose, are far greater than on this side of the Atlantic. The total endowment of Haverford College, is, I believe, not far short of £1,000,000.

### NATIONAL EDUCATION.

The subject of National Education has long claimed the earnest attention of Friends in England. It was a somewhat erratic Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, who in the early years of the nineteenth century aroused the minds of many well-to-do English people to the squalid and shameful ignorance in which the great

masses of the children of the poor in towns and cities were at that time plunged, and showed by his own exertions how the evil could be in some measure corrected. It was largely through the efforts of other Friends, especially William Allen, (with the help of a few men of high position in the country,) that Lancaster's wayward and too self-conscious enthusiasm was made the source of a great upward movement in popular education, by the founding of the "British and Foreign School Society." Its schools were, within a few years, established in many of the towns of England, and similar efforts were promoted in foreign countries. In many towns Friends were among the chief supporters of the "British Schools," which were founded on the principle that they must be open to all denominations, and that while "the lessons for reading shall consist of extracts from the Holy Scriptures, no catechism or peculiar religious tenets shall be taught."\*

After popular education became a national concern, by the Act of 1870, most of these schools gradually passed into the hands of the School Boards; and on these bodies, as well as on the School Committees which replaced them under the Act of 1902, many Friends have served. There is, I think, some ground for claiming that they have helped to soften the bitterness of the conflict between the advocates of denominational and undenominational religious teaching, which has been the bane of popular education in this country. On the whole, the Society has stood for the principle that schools supported out of public funds should be

\* See *A Century of Education* (1808-1908) by Henry Bryan Binns, chapters i.-iv. The work of the British School Society was greatly hampered by some of the clergy, who regarded it as infringing on their rightful domain; and by the establishment of Dr. Bell's rival "National Society" for the Education of the poor in the principles of the Established Church. But it is quite erroneous to imagine that the British Society was Nonconformist, or established in opposition to the Church of England. From the first prominent Anglicans were among its leading supporters.

under popular representative control, and that public money should not be used for the support of schools where the teachers are subjected to religious tests. The Yearly Meeting of 1902, when the Education Bill was before Parliament, sent a memorial to the Government to this effect.

### THE ADULT SCHOOL MOVEMENT

A solid contribution to popular education in England is being made by the Adult School Movement, which was started by Friends and in which they still take the lead. The present movement dates from about 1845, when Joseph Sturge, being impressed with the value of some Sunday classes for young men and women at Nottingham, which for many years had been carried on by a Friend, Samuel Fox, set going the "Severn Street Adult School" for young men in Birmingham. The objects aimed at were the teaching of reading and writing, and, as the most important part of the work, of the Bible. The success of the work in Birmingham was largely due to William White, who was closely connected with it from 1848 to his death in 1900. A women's school was added in 1848. The teachers at first were almost all Friends, but the work spread into other fields, and in 1871 an inter-denominational committee was appointed to extend it still further in that district. By the end of the century the number of members in the neighbourhood was nearly 7,000, and of schools 250.

Every real Adult School gathers other activities round it than the Sunday morning or afternoon lesson : Savings Funds, Libraries, Temperance Societies, Sick Clubs, and the like. In some cases club rooms are opened for the use of the members on week nights.

Since national education has had time to do its work, the need for teaching reading and writing has largely disappeared, and the place of these is often taken

by "lecturettes" or short times for the study of social, historical, literary or scientific subjects. But the Bible lesson remains the centre of the work, and the spiritual side is kept to the fore. In some places many of the members have been rescued from drink and other vices, and these and others have felt the need of a home for religious worship, which is often afforded by a fellowship meeting or mission service on Sunday evenings.

When the Adult Schools were mainly Quaker undertakings, they were organized (together with a large number of children's schools) under the "Friends' First-day School Association"; but when the movement spread into wider fields an undenominational organization became necessary. County Unions were formed, which in 1899 were united under the "National Adult School Union." This has now an office and a considerable staff of helpers at 1, Central Buildings, Westminster. The Council is elected by the County Unions, and these by the schools, so that the constitution is thoroughly democratic. Many of the leaders are still Friends.

Great care is now taken by the Council in preparing a "Lesson Sheet" for the Sunday classes of the following year—and this, though not compulsory, is used by most of the schools. The Lessons are based on the Bible, and so selected as to give variety of subjects while maintaining a high educational standard. A Lesson Handbook is prepared and published in advance, and this is of great assistance to the classes.

These classes differ from an ordinary Bible Class in many ways—chiefly in their democratic character. The "teacher" has now very generally given place to an elected "president," whose function it is to draw out and guide to a useful conclusion the thoughts of the members, rather than to do all the instruction himself.

Much has been done of late to develop the educational side of the work by week-end "Lecture Schools," the formation of Study Circles, and in some cases week-evening classes in connection with the Workers' Educational Association. Five "Guest Houses" have been opened in different parts of the country, for restful education and recreation, and two non-residential educational settlements, "St. Mary's," York, and "Beechcroft," Birkenhead. Some years ago a residential settlement for young men was opened at Fircroft, near to Woodbrooke, and the two settlements were mutually helpful until the Military Service Acts made it necessary to close the former.\* Several very stimulating "Summer Schools" have been held at Fircroft and Woodbrooke during summer holidays.

The figures reported in the Adult School Directory at the close of 1914 were: County or District Unions, 30; membership—men, 47,780, women, 34,128—total 81,908. Average attendance on Sundays, 48,137. (There were in addition 5,500 older boys and girls forming the Junior Section.)

The ideal of the Adult School Movement may perhaps be expressed as co-operative education in religion and right living; and it is undoubtedly having a marked effect in the development of manhood and womanhood on strong independent lines. It has been of great value in training men (and women too) for the right discharge of the duties of citizenship, whether as leaders of co-operative societies, members of Trade Councils and Town Councils, and even in some cases as candidates for Parliament. The movement is undoubtedly a considerable, and I hope a growing, religious and educational force in England.†

It was a serious concern with the late J. Wilhelm

\* It is now (1919) about to be re-opened.

† See chapter on "Adult Schools" in the *Life of Joshua Rowntree*, by S. E. Robson, pp. 157-171.

Rowntree lest with all its excellence Adult School work should lead some of our members to neglect the service of their meetings, and so should undermine the spiritual force of the Society ; and perhaps the words of William White to the present writer, " The Church is always first," convey a needed caution. The work itself will suffer if the deepest springs of life are not maintained.

#### NOTE ON THE EDUCATION COMMISSION, 1918-1919.

In 1918 an Education Commission was set up by the Yearly Meeting " to make full inquiry into the need for, and the provision of, Quaker Education." Its Report, a carefully prepared pamphlet of 48 pages, was presented to the Y.M. of 1919. The Report shows that in London Y.M. the number of children and young persons likely to be brought up as Friends, between the ages of 5 and 19, was 3710, of whom only 691 were at Friends' boarding-schools, public or private. 977 were at public Elementary schools. It is not possible here adequately to summarise the conclusions of the Report, but it may be mentioned that among the general recommendations are (1) that every child should have full-time schooling up to 16 years of age at least, in such schools as are best suited to its needs; (2) that there should be no differentiation on the ground of social class; (3) that distinctive Quaker teaching should be available for all; and (4) that every child should have the opportunity of some period of Quaker fellowship. Detailed suggestions are made for a common policy in education throughout the Y.M. ; and it is stated that to maintain it in efficiency at least £30,000 a year will be needed.

## CHAPTER XI

### MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

"The Quaker movement was in its essence, and from the very beginning, world-embracing in its scope. The doctrine of the Light Within marked off the attitude of the Friends towards human nature as entirely different from that which was prevalent in their day. There could be no race of men, and no country, where God had not spoken, and where His voice could not be heard. They pushed out in every direction with the joyful certainty, not simply that God had sent them, and was working with them, but that He had gone before, and had been preparing in each heart a place for the message they were to bring."

HENRY T. HODGKIN, *The Missionary Spirit*, pp. 47-49.

THE early Friends had made a new and wonderful discovery—the discovery of a living God; and in the spirit of children they were driven by an irresistible impulse to tell others of what they had found. That is, and always must be, the secret of every true missionary—and the reason why people misunderstand and often despise him is simply that they have not a clue to the secret. The missionary spirit is the desire to share with others a glorious gift—the best thing life has to offer; and its absence from a church may be taken as a sign that religion is no longer felt by the majority as a great and glorious thing.

#### THE PUBLISHERS OF TRUTH.

I have heard it said that we don't want apostles of Quakerism; what we want is apostles of Christ. I share the feeling myself. No *ism* is "a great and glorious thing." The early Friends thought of themselves not as publishers of Quakerism (for no such word was then invented) but as "publishers of Truth."



And no sooner had George Fox gathered and settled a substantial following among the hills and dales of North-west England, than he sent out about sixty of them—not by his own authority but by what they felt to be the leading of the Spirit—to spread the truth all over the country.\* They and others went further to proclaim the message in Wales, Ireland and Scotland.† This was in 1654 and the years following. These men and women well knew what it would mean to them in hardship, physical violence, and imprisonment, and within a few years a number of them laid down their lives, owing to the treatment they received; but they were well content to suffer in the cause of Christ.

### BEYOND THE SEAS.

There was clearly no thought in their minds that because people had (without knowing it) a Light in their souls therefore the message of the living Christ did not need to be proclaimed. They longed to carry it to the ends of the earth. We have already noted how, at a General Meeting at Scalehouse, near Skipton, as early as 1658, a collection was asked for to meet the expenses of Friends travelling "beyond the seas"‡; and this practice was continued, especially in the North, during the years that followed.

The most obvious field of labour outside the British islands was presented by the American Colonies. A base for operations there was found in the island of Barbadoes, whence Friends sailed to proclaim Truth to Puritan New England. There followed the fiercest

\* *Beginnings of Quakerism*, chap. viii.

† *Beginnings of Quakerism*, chap. x.

‡ See above, p. 91. The facts that follow are drawn mainly from *Beginnings of Quakerism*, chap. xvi. For America see also *The Quakers in Amer. Col.*, pp 26-110.

of all the persecutions to which Friends were subjected. They were driven from Boston and forbidden to return to Massachusetts on pain of death ; but they preferred " to obey God rather than men." Four of them were executed on Boston Common : Marmaduke Stephenson and William Robinson in 1659, Mary Dyer in 1660, and William Leddra in 1661. Friends in England appealed to the Government, and a special message was sent by Charles II. prohibiting such barbarities—a New England Quaker, Samuel Shattuck, being entrusted with its delivery to the Colonial authorities.

After the death of Mary Dyer, a member of the Boston Court publicly proclaimed that " she did hang as a flag for others to take example by." The prophecy proved true in a way he had not expected ; and in spite of continued bitter persecution—or rather, perhaps, in consequence of it—the Truth rapidly spread, until at one time it seemed probable that the whole religious life of some of the Colonies would be transformed by it. The disappointment of this expectation must be put down, I believe, mainly to prosperity in business and the advance of Quietism (which in spite of constant visits from travelling ministers largely withered the early missionary zeal), and to neglect of religious education.

Turning their thoughts eastwards, the Friends first sought entrance into Protestant countries, especially Holland, the refuge of the persecuted, a country in which movements akin to Quakerism were already stirring. They were welcomed in Amsterdam, and in other places, and some meetings were settled—the chief difficulties being the difference of language, and the tendency of the free method of worship to attract " cranks " and fanatics, a trouble not unknown elsewhere. A good many people, some of them persons of distinction, embraced the Quaker teaching without leaving their own communions. Holland provided

a base for the "peaceful penetration" of Germany, whither numerous Friends travelled between 1657 and 1661, being helped by Princess Elizabeth of Heidelberg, sister of the "Prince Rupert" known in English history. We read of Friends visiting Hamburg and Dantzic, and travelling to Bohemia, Hungary and Poland, but for the most part without success in establishing meetings.

About the end of 1660, Fox wrote of "a seed of God to be gathered in Russia, Poland, Hungary and Sweden," but apparently the needed labourers were not forthcoming.

Attempts were made to spread the Truth in Roman Catholic countries, but these met with little success. In France Quaker missionaries were quickly stopped in their work, and one, George Bayly, died in a Paris prison. At the same time endeavours were made to reach the shores of the Mediterranean. Several Friends tried to visit Palestine, but most of them failed. The British Consuls regarded them as fanatics, and refused them facilities for travel. In 1657 a fund of over £177 was raised for Turkey, whither a party of six Friends, three men and three women, felt a concern to travel. After a stay at Leghorn, where they had service among English, Jews and Roman Catholics, they succeeded in reaching Smyrna, whence the Consul shipped them back to Venice. On the way the ship put in at Zante, owing to bad weather, and the party divided—three of them, including Mary Fisher, landing there to travel by land to Adrianople in order to interview the Sultan of Turkey. There is a dearth of facts about this adventurous journey. All we know is that the Sultan, a young man of seventeen, was informed by his Vizier that an Englishwoman had come to him with a message from God; that Mary Fisher (aged twenty-five) was brought into his presence with much ceremony; that she waited in silence till the

Sultan told her to speak her mind freely, and that she then spoke to him through an interpreter. The Sultan declared that all she said was true, and invited her to stay in the country. This she declined, and also his proffered escort. She reached Constantinople without a guard and thence returned to England.\*

Meanwhile the other half of the party, which included John Perrot and John Luffe, went on to Venice, where they interviewed the Doge. They proceeded to Rome, and fell into the hands of the Inquisition. Luffe was taken before the Pope, sentenced to death, and hanged. Perrot was detained in prison, or—a fact not surprising in view of his later proceedings†—in a mad-house, and was not liberated till 1661. During his imprisonment a number of other Friends visited Venice, then a cosmopolitan city, and preached and wrote to “Turks, Jews, Indians, Papists and Protestants.” They found some openness to receive their message, particularly among the Jews; and, though in constant dangers from the Inquisition, they returned home unmolested.

In 1659 Katharine Evans and Sarah Chevers set off for Jerusalem; but they got no further than Malta, where they were seized by the Inquisitor and kept in prison for three years. Terrible privations and threats of death, imposed to make them abjure their faith, wholly failed to shake their constancy. “In our deepest afflictions,” wrote one of them, “when I looked for every breath to be my last, I could not wish that I had not come over the seas.” While these women were in prison three more Friends set off for the East, intending to go as far as China. They carried letters from Fox to the Kings of Spain and France, to the Pope, to the Sultan of Turkey, to the Emperor of China, to “Prester John” (the supposed Christian

\* There is a good account of Mary Fisher in Miss Brailsford's book, *Quaker Women*.

† See above, p. 94.

King of Ethiopia), and "to all the nations under the whole heavens." They got no further than Alexandria, but two of them returned by way of Constantinople. One of these, Daniel Baker, on his way back through Italy, made great efforts to secure the liberation of the two women imprisoned in Malta, finally offering his own life for theirs, but in vain. In the end, through the aid of Queen Henrietta Maria, and Lord D'Aubigny, both Catholics, Friends in England succeeded in obtaining their release.

"Quakerism," says W. C. Braithwaite, "reached the Mediterranean shores not in a form which could bring its truths home to the comprehension of the Latin races and the Mohammedans, for this would have needed a sympathy and a knowledge far beyond the powers of the Publishers of Truth; but rather as a sign of some great but mysterious Divine working, which evidenced itself in the courage and pertinacity of those who pressed through every danger even to Jerusalem or into the presence of the Sultan, and in the endurance which overcame even the terrors of the pitiless Inquisition."\*

The Friends of those days had little idea of the long patience and quiet educational work needed to bring home to non-Christian people, or to those trained in degenerate forms of Christianity, the message of a living Christ. But the heroic courage with which these men (and still more these women) faced the unspeakable terrors of pirate-infested seas—compared with which the risk to-day of being sunk by a German mine or torpedo is but a lesser danger—brings home to us the depth of their conviction, and their overmastering consciousness of a great and glorious light in their own souls, which they would brave anything to share with others.

\* *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 433.

## THE DAYS OF QUIETISM.

Within a generation, however, Quietism settled down over the Society of Friends, and its sense of a great world-mission was largely lost. Its efforts became centred in the endeavour to keep its own purity unsullied from the world.

And yet, all through the "middle ages" of the Society, there was a succession of men and women who felt laid on them the burden of humanity, and who journeyed far and wide over the world with a living gospel message. John Woolman, who travelled to England and died of small-pox at York in 1772, "felt the depth and extent of the misery of his fellow-creatures, separated from the divine harmony," to such a degree that at times he was so "mixed with them that he might not consider himself as a distinct or separate being."\* Job Scott, another American preacher, died twenty years later in the North of Ireland. Stephen Grellet travelled many times over the continent of Europe, visiting especially the rulers of the nations. Joseph John Gurney and his sister Elizabeth Fry held large meetings in these islands and elsewhere with people quite outside the borders of the Society. My own grandmother, Sarah (Lynes) Grubb, a small frail woman, preached in fairs and markets. These are only illustrations, which might easily be multiplied, of the devoted labours of Quaker ministers, proclaiming a gospel that they knew was for all the world.

## OPPOSITION TO MISSIONARY WORK.

But it was not till after the middle of the nineteenth century, that the Society of Friends in England was prepared to listen to any proposal for the establishment of definite mission work, whether home or foreign, as a settled part of its policy. The causes of this

\* John Woolman's *Journal* (Whittier edition), pp. 275, 264.

opposition were many; it was not entirely due to spiritual indolence and indifference, though this must undoubtedly be recognised as one of them.

In the first place, the testimony to a Free Ministry was so interpreted as to preclude the offering of settled maintenance to missionaries, whether at home or abroad. Support was freely provided for Friends while travelling in the ministry, if their "concern" had been approved by their meetings; but to guarantee it for those who settled down in one place to teach and preach was generally regarded as the setting up of a paid ministry. Friends could not endure the thought of some of their members making the preaching of the Gospel their settled occupation, apart from some "moving of the Spirit" which drew them to a particular piece of service, the limits of which could be in some measure foreseen and defined. The enthusiasm which led people to wish to devote themselves to religious work in general, and to forsake their "secular" occupations for it, was regarded as "creaturely activity"—as working in man's own will and way without waiting to be Divinely led. This, I believe, was the deepest root of the objection; and in my judgment it deserved the earnest consideration which it undoubtedly received.

Secondly, the long isolation of the Friends from the religious and political world about them, and their pre-occupation with their own affairs, had developed in many a conviction that Quakerism was only possible for the few—only suited to a particular type of mind. To a large extent the idea prevailed that most people needed more outward supports for their religious life than Quaker principles and methods could supply, and that therefore they were better left alone. This idea was destructive of the missionary impulse, which requires the conviction that the "pearl" one has discovered for oneself is what others need and what

they can appreciate and receive. I hope to consider this difficulty further in the concluding chapter.

Thirdly, we should note that the demand for liberty and support for missionary activity was mainly the outcome of the different Evangelical movements that swept over England from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards. These were late in affecting the Society of Friends, but eventually they altered its whole aspect in this country—and still more in America. It would be quite beyond the scope of this chapter to deal with this large subject. I can only say here that while, in my judgment, the Evangelical movement brought new personal religious life to many Friends, and freed them from the hard and narrow conservatism which had become a bondage in the Society not unlike that of the Pharisees of old, it also loosed many of them from attachment to, and even understanding of, the essentials of the Quaker faith. To use an American phrase, they threw away the bath-water, and the baby too. Many Evangelical Friends ceased to believe in the Inward Light, and even declared it to be an error. One of my own Quaker schoolmasters, a follower of J. J. Gurney, in Church history lessons used to teach us that the doctrines of the early Friends were quite "unsound."

The plea for the recognition and support of mission-work in the Society came, in the main, from Friends who held but feebly, if they did not actually oppose, the deepest truth of Quakerism. It was a demand for freedom to proclaim, not the early message of the Universal Light of Christ, but the generally accepted doctrines of Evangelical Christianity. To these there might be added special tenets such as the non-necessity of Sacraments and the sinfulness of War; but these additions were not logically connected with any basic principle. The basis being abandoned they were left in the air, except in so far as they could be deduced from



the letter of Scripture—from which source other Evangelicals deduced precisely opposite conclusions. The new missionary impulse was thus widely different from that of the early Friends.

It is such facts as these—too little understood by Friends—that explain the tragedy that the missionary awakening in the Society, about the middle of the nineteenth century, encountered opposition not alone from the dry traditionalists, but from many of the most saintly and spiritually-minded persons in the Society.\*

#### THE GROWTH OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

I hope at the close of this chapter to indicate some of the ways in which we are, as I trust, beginning to "repair the old wastes, the desolations of many generations." It seemed needful to explain their nature, in order that the recent missionary activity of the Society might be properly understood; and I now turn to a brief sketch of its progress.

Apart from efforts made by American Friends to instruct the Indians, the first attempt to reach the "heathen" was made in 1821, when four Friends sailed for the west coast of Africa, on a mission of instruction to the Negroes.† The matter had been brought before the Meeting for Sufferings, but rejected, and their expenses were raised privately by Friends. Three of them soon died, and the mission was abandoned. In 1830 Bristol and Somerset Quarterly Meeting called the attention of the Yearly Meeting to the duty of the Society to the "heathen." This matter

\* This is even more true in America, where actual separations have occurred, dividing the body into sections, each of which claims to be the true "Society of Friends." (See my book, *Separations, their Causes and Effects*; also an article "Joseph John Gurney" in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, July, 1914, pp. 292-309.)

† This and the following paragraphs are drawn chiefly from *Friends Beyond Seas*, by Dr. H. T. Hodgkin, chapters ii.-v.

was reserved for full discussion till 1832, when a large committee was appointed to consider it further and report. The report, presented in 1833, was negative in character, and nothing further was done for many years beyond personal religious visits of travelling ministers to distant lands.

In 1859 the attention of Friends was recalled to the subject by an aged minister, George Richardson, of Newcastle. As the result of his efforts, a Conference was held at Ackworth in 1860, and in the same year the subject was introduced once more at the Yearly Meeting. Again a committee was appointed, which reported in 1861, recommending that arrangements should be made for the support of Friends who felt called to missionary work. It was, however, four years more before any active steps were taken, and then by a number of Friends in their private capacity. In 1865 a Provisional Committee was formed, which accepted an offer from Rachel Metcalfe to go as a missionary to India, and of Joseph S. Sewell and Louis Street to work in co-operation with the London Missionary Society in Madagascar. These were the first Quaker missionaries who settled for any lengthened period in distant lands.

In 1867 the Provisional Committee gave place to the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, whose object was defined to be "to aid the spread of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and Mission Work abroad, chiefly by assisting such members of the Society of Friends, or those in profession with them, as are believed to be called of the Lord to this service."

Within a few years other missionaries were sent out, feeling a call to assist the work either of Rachel Metcalfe in India or of J. S. Sewell in Madagascar. In the latter country the work of education was vigorously pursued, and a strong mission established. About 1872 a mission in Syria, on the slopes of the

Lebanon, was undertaken by a different Committee, which in the year 1898 was amalgamated with the Friends' Foreign Mission Association.\*

Work in China, which has developed into the strongest of all our missions, was begun in the western province of Sze-chwan in 1886; and ten years later a mission was established in Ceylon. About the same time an industrial mission was established, directly under the control of the Yearly Meeting, in the island of Pemba (East Africa), which had lately become, with Zanzibar, a British possession. Its special object was to counter the evils of slavery by helping the natives to secure their freedom and teaching them to work, while at the same time instructing them in the Christian religion.

There are thus at the present time six localities in which Friends are labouring in the foreign mission field—India, Madagascar, Syria, China, Ceylon, and Pemba. The number of missionaries is now, after fifty years of missionary effort, over one hundred, and the annual cost of their work is about £25,000. Of this an increasing—though as yet a relatively small—amount is raised among the natives themselves, the object being to develop gradually native churches which shall be self-maintaining and self-propagating, and so independent of the foreigner. Medical work and education have always gone hand in hand with the preaching of the Gospel; and the danger of setting up a paid ministry, has been, on the whole, successfully avoided. In some of the missions, especially China and Syria (until work in the latter district was stopped by the entry of Turkey into the war), Quaker Meetings for Worship have been established—though there is no desire to mould the spiritual life of the converts on western models. In China the Friends' Mission has united with others in establishing a joint University at Chengtu, and University graduates, both men and

women, are engaged in the work. Recently, a successful attempt has been made to reach the educated people (merchants and others) in the city of Ghungking by opening an Institute, in which they freely gather and which they largely conduct themselves. It is in China that the power of essential Quaker teaching to satisfy the needs of the native mind has been, perhaps, most fully proved.

### HOME MISSIONS.

The same evangelical spirit, which broke through conservative opposition and started Friends on the path of Foreign Missions, led many of them to work for the awakening and evangelising of the people about them—especially of the poorer and less educated. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards "Mission Meetings" on Sunday evenings were begun in many places, by Friends singly or in groups, often in place of the Sunday evening Meeting for Worship, which was in many cases languishing. These meetings were usually held with the singing of hymns, Bible reading, and often with a gospel address. No long time, as a rule, was devoted to silent worship, but frequently some part of the Meeting was left free for anyone to take vocal part, in brief ministry or prayer who felt led to do so.

The demand grew that such work as this should be recognised as an essential part of the Society's duty, and that in particular the Society should make itself responsible for the maintenance of Friends who felt the inward call to devote themselves wholly to it. Strong objections were raised on the grounds already indicated\*; but at last, in 1882, after a far from unanimous discussion in the Yearly Meeting, the Clerk declared "the sense of the Meeting" to be that action should be taken. The Home Mission Committee was

\* See above, p. 198-200.

set up, but was directed to obtain the necessary funds by special subscription. It proceeded to arrange for the support of mission workers, specially in places where Friends were weak but where openings for work were presented. As a rule, care was taken to act only with the concurrence of the local Monthly Meeting; and in some cases gratifying results were shown in the gathering of considerable congregations, and in the addition of members to the Society. But it was not a chief concern of those who had the Mission Work most at heart to give the essential Quaker message. Most of them drew a sharp distinction in their own minds between this, which they regarded as a denominational aim, and the preaching of the Gospel, which seemed to them a much greater thing.\*

The reports presented by the Committee from year to year produced painful discussions in the Yearly Meeting. The work was severely criticized—for setting up what was regarded as a paid ministry, for departing from the Quaker methods of worship, and so forth. Most of the criticism failed to draw adequate attention to the root difficulty, which consisted in the distinction so widely drawn, especially by most of the Committee and of its workers, between preaching the Gospel and proclaiming the Quaker faith. The dissatisfaction was sufficiently great to lead, in 1894, to the step of putting the Committee on a more representative basis, by having it nominated by the Quarterly Meetings. The result was to transfer the division of opinion from the Yearly Meeting to the Committee itself, which was for some years considerably hampered in its work. Gradually, however, the Committee succeeded in adapting its labours to the

\* The motto "Christians first and Quakers afterwards" would have been quite unintelligible to the Early Friends; for to them it was a matter of extreme importance what sort of "Christians" people became.

real wishes of the greater part of the Society, in which the old cleavage had happily begun to disappear. It put less emphasis on the support of whole-time mission workers, and more on the task of proclaiming the real message of Quakerism, and endeavouring to build up strong and independent congregational life. The change was marked by the enlargement of its name, in 1906, to the "Home Mission and Extension Committee," which it still bears.

In London much valuable mission work has been done by an independent organization, "the Bedford Institute Association" (named after Peter Bedford, a noted Quaker philanthropist, of Spitalfields), which, founded in 1865, gradually built up work in nine centres in the Metropolis. At each branch there are schools, religious meetings, and clubs of different kinds, some of the premises being in use every day of the week.

#### SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

Closely associated with the Home Mission work, though preceding most of it in time, have been a large number of Sunday Schools for children. These differ from most Sunday Schools, whether Anglican or Nonconformist, in being for the most part quite unsectarian in character. They were established under the Evangelical impulse, and have never been regarded as feeders for membership in the Society. In but few of them are Quaker principles taught. The schools were united and supported by the "Friends' First-day School Association," which cared also for the Adult Schools under the management of Friends until, in 1899, these were for the most part transferred to the care of the undenominational Adult School Union. In recent years the Association has done excellent pioneer work in helping on the reform of Sunday-School methods (in connection with which a training institution for teachers has been opened at West Hill,

Birmingham), by issuing the magazine *Teachers and Taught*, by the preparation of simple Biblical textbooks for teachers, and in other ways. It has also endeavoured to introduce some definite Quaker teaching into the schools, and has opened nearly sixty local classes for the children of Friends.

#### QUAKER EXTENSION WORK.

In recent years the awakening of Friends to their duty towards the community around them, particularly towards persons of some education, who are dissatisfied with most of the forms of organized Christianity, has led to vigorous "extension" work being carried on, particularly in the larger centres of population. Several of the Quarterly Meetings now have "Extension Committees," whose object it is to spread an understanding of the Quaker faith, and to bring its appeal home to those whom it is likely to help. Of these the most active is the "Yorkshire 1905 Committee,"\* which has done excellent pioneer work in caring for the spiritual life of the meetings in Yorkshire, and in seeking to reach with the Quaker message groups of people who are detached from the churches. Efforts are made to widen the outlook of Friends by providing literature and arranging courses of lectures, week-end Settlements, and the regular visitation of meetings.

In the Birmingham district many new meetings have been established, with considerable additions to the membership of the Society. In London and some other cities the drift of population to the suburbs has been followed, and, while some of the central meetings have become much smaller, many new ones have been opened in residential districts.

\* The name was adopted because in that year the Yearly Meeting was held at Leeds in Yorkshire, after having been held in London for more than 230 years consecutively. The Committee was also set up with the desire to carry forward the work of John Wilhelm Rowntree, who died in March, 1905.

Along with this there has been a strong concern in the minds of many Friends to help the members of the Society to equip themselves for its work in the world by providing facilities for religious instruction. The important Conference at Manchester, organized in 1895 under the auspices of the Home Mission Committee, was the beginning of the Summer School movement, which issued in the formation of the Woodbrooke Settlement, as mentioned in the last chapter.\* The Woodbrooke Extension Committee aims at extending opportunities for religious instruction to Friends in their own localities, by the provision of week-end Lecture Schools, encouraging the formation of Study Circles, and the like. A strong committee of "Young Friends" was set up in 1911,† and affiliated to the Home Mission and Extension Committee, which is doing vigorous work for helping the spiritual life of the younger members and drawing them into lines of useful service. A number of its leading young men are at this time (February, 1917) undergoing imprisonment as conscientious objectors to military service.

In 1909 a non-residential educational settlement was established, partly under the care of the Yorkshire 1905 Committee, at "Swarthmore," Leeds, and has drawn a large number of students, Friends and others.‡

These evidences of active work are not mentioned in a spirit of complacency, but as signs that the Society of Friends at the present time is re-awakening to the depth and reality of its mission in the world.

\* See above, p. 184.

† See *Swanwick*, 1911, a report of the Conference of Young Friends held at the Hayes, Swanwick, in that year, with an account of the Young Friends' Movement by A. N. Brayshaw.

‡ See article "Swarthmore and St. Mary's," by Gerald K. Hibbert, M.A., (warden of "Swarthmore," in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, January, 1911.



## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PRESENT OUTLOOK.

"Quakerism absorbed? How much of public worship is real? How much a convention demanded by society as the sign-manual of respectability? How many who name the name of Christ know Him in their hearts? How many suffer with Him for the cruelty, the wars, the poverty, the vice, the shame, the sin, that still shuts against us the doors of Paradise? How many love their neighbour as themselves? No! Quakerism is not absorbed. There is room yet for the teaching of the Inward Light, for the witness of the living God, for a reinterpretation of the Christ in lives that shall convict the careless, language that shall convince the doubting. The dust of a busy commerce hides the Cross. The Christ of the people is but a lay figure draped in a many-coloured garment of creeds, and, worshipping the counterfeit of its own creation, the world sins on."

JOHN WILHELM ROWNTREE, *Essays and Addresses*, p. 74.

WHAT, in conclusion, is the worth of the Society of Friends in relation to the religious life of to-day? Has it still a work to do, or is it no longer needed? Have the other Christian Churches so far absorbed any truth for which we stand that we need not maintain a separate existence? If, on the other hand, the quality of the Inward Light, and of all that flows from it, is needed to-day as urgently as ever, is the existing body of Friends capable of proclaiming it? Or must we give place to some new movement, that will perform the task of which we have been found unworthy? Let us glance at some features of present-day religion, that we may see how matters stand.

#### I. THE REALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

The world is in sore need of a living witness to the reality and power of the spiritual world. While materialism as a philosophy is discredited, materialism of practice and outlook has strengthened its hold over the lives of men and women. The old sanctions,

whatever they were worth, of a future world of rewards and punishments are no longer taken for granted; by many they are treated as a joke. The existence of God as a real factor that counts in the lives of men and women is not so much denied as ignored; prayer is put aside as useless; the claims of Jesus Christ to control all the interests of human life, economic and international as well as personal, are frankly rejected, even by many who profess His name. The pursuit of wealth and pleasure is the dominant interest of the mass of people in almost every "Christian" nation, and most of all in those whose material progress has been the most rapid. In this materialising of life, this closing of the eyes to unseen and eternal realities, Germany has taken the lead; but the disease is confined to no one country.\* The nations have sought to safeguard their material interests by multiplying armaments and strengthening their alliances; and, as a direct result of this, they are now hurrying headlong to mutual destruction.

What the effect of the great war and its consequent long-continued suffering may be, on those who are left alive, it is impossible to foresee. But, so far, the organized Christian Churches have been almost powerless to stem the current. In the better educated countries their hold is feeble; in others, like Russia, a dominant Church still sways the lives of multitudes.† But everywhere the Church is regarded by many of the most ardent spirits as standing for injustice and the interests of the propertied class; and, by giving its blessing to the arms of its own country, it has become fatally divided against itself. It is the Church of a nation and no longer the Church of humanity; and its God has become once more a tribal deity. It need

\* No religious teacher has been more alive to this than the German philosopher, Rudolf Eucken.

† This was written, of course, before the Russian revolution.

cause little wonder if its witness for spiritual realities is treated with contempt.

In our own country, the minds of many whom materialism cannot satisfy, and who find little help from organized Christianity, are drawn to make trial of new and fancy substitutes. The religion of humanity, in many forms, is made to do duty for the religion that binds men to a personal God revealed in the perfect Man. These subjective faiths may minister for a time to spiritual needs; but, as Eucken has powerfully shown, man needs for his final support (not only as an individual, but collectively) an objective Reality, above and beyond himself.

Is there no call here for the ministry of those who profess that to them God is that supreme Reality—that they know Him, not by word or creed or outward authority of Church or holy Book, but in the depths of their own experience? Such witness will have weight proportioned to the reality and power of the experience from which it springs, and the consistency of the lives of those who give it; and this experience is dearly bought. We cannot speak the word with power unless we are willing to pay the price. "Only he who has can give," wrote Emerson; "he on whom the Soul descends alone can speak." It is those who are willing to drink the cup and share the baptism of their Lord that alone will have power to convince others of the reality of their Christian faith.

But our witness to spiritual reality is much more than an individual thing. Weak as our corporate life has been, it is yet a far stronger testimony than all of us could have given singly. In all ages of the Church there have been Mystics who could speak to men out of a first-hand knowledge of God and of His will. Many of these, like St. Francis, have remained as saints and leaders within the fold of one of the orthodox communions. What few or none besides George

Fox have done is to build up a lasting Society on the conviction that each member of it may have the same direct access to the Spirit of God, the same right to claim His immediate guidance.

"It is one thing for an individual to claim divine inspiration; it is quite another for a religious community to survive in harmony and usefulness when each member may put forth a similar claim. The natural presumption would be that such a community must very soon fall to pieces, torn by conflicting infallibilities.

"The chief or only test we can apply, to gauge the worth of a claim to inspiration, when made by an individual, is that of fruitfulness—the spiritual, moral and intellectual value to the world of that which he achieves. But, in the case of a community, the fact that it holds together, not only producing strong and beautiful characters, but achieving *corporate* usefulness, is a much stronger evidence of the reality of a guiding and inspiring Spirit; for such fruitfulness can only mean that human wills have really been brought into harmony by submission to a Higher Will—through which submission, with no loss of individuality, they have found a deeper unity."\*

For this reason I believe that the maintenance of the Society of Friends as a separate organization, founded on the reality of the Inward Light, is an important part of our witness to the truth of Christian faith.

## 2. THE DIVISIONS OF CHRISTENDOM.

One of the greatest causes of weakness, in the testimony of the Church as a whole to the reality of God and the spiritual world, is found in its divisions. It is not only that in this great war national ties have

\* *The Unity of Faith*: chapter by the present writer on "The Society of Friends," p. 167.

proved stronger than "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The spectacle of great Christian bodies each claiming that it alone has the truth of God and maintains the order instituted by Jesus Christ—each unchurching the others as false and schismatical—has long been one of the chief causes of disbelief. Hence every true Christian must ardently desire that in some way the divided branches may be reunited. In the foreign Mission field, where different Christian bodies find themselves faced with a common task, some kind of union has become a pressing necessity. For there is no sense in reproducing among native Christians all the divisions of western Christendom; indeed, a true native Church cannot be built on these lines. Hence we have movements for the Federation of Churches, like the Kikuyu Conference in East Africa (June, 1913). These movements are directed for the most part towards finding a basis of doctrine in which all can agree, and a minimum of religious observance which all will recognise as valid.

In the help of such movements towards unity, Friends may have a very special part to play. For in their view the search for unity on the lines of a common creed and a minimum of uniformity in religious practice is on radically wrong lines. They have never believed that Christian Unity is to be found in this sphere. Creeds and practices are precisely the things that have divided Christians from one another, and probably always will divide them. The Quaker view has always been that Christian Unity consists, not in *uniformity* of creeds and practices, but in a *common spirit* of loyalty to Jesus Christ, based on a common experience of His power in our souls, and leading to a life of practical devotion to the good of men.\* It is the unity of those in whom Christ is reproducing His own

\* See pamphlet, *The True Basis of Unity*, issued by the Society of Friends, 1917.

character. If space allowed, I could quote passages to this effect from Penington, Penn, Thomas Story, Woolman, and many more. The true Unity is to be found in the midst of diversity of thought and of religious observance. That is the real contribution we have to make towards the Reunion of Christendom, and in my view it is of the utmost importance. What the Mission field is showing is that this Reunion will not be achieved through theoretical discussions of points of doctrine or practice, but in a common work done in a common spirit—in co-operation in the mighty task of bringing in the Kingdom of God.

But, further, we can show, if we are faithful to the truth committed to us, that with our methods the main causes of division do not even arise. We have never attached prime importance to definitions of Christian belief; and yet, from the first, we believe we have retained fundamental orthodoxy. In our free method of worship no questions of precedence occur, no difficulties about the validity of sacraments or of clerical orders. All Christians can sit down together in the fellowship of silence, if they choose to do so, and give freedom to any to speak or offer vocal prayer as they are led by the Spirit. I believe it may be said with truth that the Quaker method of worship is the only one in which all Christians can join without difficulties arising.

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is yet I believe perfectly true that the best contribution we can make to Unity among Christians is to stand firmly by our own principles—not, of course, in a contentious spirit—and not to give way on certain points for the sake of a superficial uniformity. For by standing firm we may make it necessary for others to broaden their foundation by recognising publicly that we have the reality of Christianity without its forms. In Madagascar, and to some extent in China, Friends have

been strong enough to secure that their native members shall be received as Christians by other Churches, if they move into a different locality, though they have never been baptized with water and do not take the outward communion. To give way on such points would not be to cut down a hedge but to help others in erecting one—not to broaden the Church but to assist in narrowing it. Our principles unchurch no one because he thinks it right to be baptized or confirmed or to take the communion outwardly. We simply decline to join in excluding Christians from the fold on the ground that they cannot follow certain forms, or cannot define their faith in a particular formula. We can do more for true Unity by maintaining our principles than by abandoning them. The freedom we wish to see recognised is not a mere colourless absence of convictions ; it is a positive element which we believe to be vital for the real Unity of the Church.

### 3. THE POSITION OF WOMEN.

In regard to the position and work of women, Friends have a most important contribution to offer towards the solution of one of the vital questions of the day. We owe more than any of us can possibly express to the fact that all through our history we have striven to recognise the spiritual equality of the sexes, and have made large use of the ministry of women. From the first, we have aimed at equal education for both boys and girls, and our women have been true helpmeets for men in the home, in the Church, and in public life. In the many discussions of the present day on the relations of the sexes, the independence of women, marriage and divorce, one constantly wishes that the disputants had had more direct experience of what womanhood may be, and how men and women can co-operate, in a society where spiritual equality is fully

recognised. Much that was recently written on the proposal that women should take a share as preachers in the National Mission of Repentance and Hope was to us two centuries behind the times. I have heard that not long ago, in one of the Missionary Societies, it was decided, after a long controversy, to admit women to their Committee meetings—but without the right to vote. Our missionary Committees could hardly be worked without the help of women, and the question of voting could not even arise.

#### 4. MODERN SEEKERS AFTER GOD.

For many years past the Adult Schools have been bringing some of our most active members into close touch with men and women who are earnestly concerned for the reconstruction of human society on a basis of brotherhood and co-operation. Many of these, while fully convinced that spiritual life and the religious motive are necessary elements in such a reconstruction, cannot look to the existing churches for the inspiration of which they feel the need, and are largely out of communion with any of them. The churches seem to them too closely tied up with existing institutions and interests, too little democratic in their sympathies, and their teaching appears too conventional and professional—a thing paid for and supplied to order. Our own meetings for worship, for the most part, are too much like family parties of rather "superior" people for them to feel at home there. But, whenever they meet for religious fellowship, this inevitably takes the form of a free Quaker meeting rather than of a church service; and their spiritual needs are such as we ought, if we are awake to our opportunities, to be able to supply. Their position is not unlike that of the "Seekers" to whom George Fox was able to minister.



Since the war began, and especially since the Military Service Acts were passed, large numbers of young men and women in many parts of the country have been drawn into association with the Society, as the only religious body that holds their conviction that all war is wrong, and the only one that is willing to support them in their refusal to take part in it. Some of these are members of other Churches, but have become alienated from them because of the warlike attitude they have taken. Others are Socialists, members perhaps of the Independent Labour Party, without religious ties. A good many have been in attendance at Sunday evening meetings carried on by Friends, and have found in them a haven of refuge. A considerable number of these young men, in prison or military detention for their conscientious objection to war, have been visited by Friends, and some have found in Quaker Meetings held in prison a new inspiration. They know as yet but little of our history or what we stand for, and we in our turn know too little of their attitude of mind. Yet here, surely, is an opening ready to our hands for both giving and receiving help, such as has hardly come to us since the seventeenth century.

It is not a question of exploiting the opportunity in the interests of our own denomination. It is a question whether we have that to give which others need—for which indeed they are crying out. The future of our country may depend in part on the way in which we respond to this unexpected call. For some of these men and women are people of great ability, and will be among the Labour leaders of future years. Their attitude may greatly depend on whether or not they have found among Christian professors any who could "speak to their condition"; and they may have no small part in deciding whether the Labour movement of the future, in the great struggle that is likely

to follow the war, shall run on materialistic or spiritual lines. If we show them as little sympathy as they have received from most of the other Christian bodies, there is too much reason to fear that many of them will be permanently alienated from religion.

Nor is it in this country only that such people will be found. Among the other belligerents it is to be feared that conscientious objectors to warfare have for the most part been summarily shot\*; but they are known to exist in some of the neutral nations, and after the war their numbers in all countries will almost certainly be greatly increased. The Labour movement will become increasingly an international organization, especially that part of it which is opposed to all war; and, if we are in touch with it, our opportunities for service may be widely extended.

### OUR MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD.

That service is not merely one of ministering to the spiritual life of individuals. A great world message has been given us, the truth of which will be brought home as never before by the ghastly futilities of this war—specially, that the real guarantees for the safety of nations are not material but spiritual: that the only practical safeguard is to be found in justice at home and abroad, and in goodwill to all men, coupled with entire disarmament. This ought all along to have been the clear message of Christ to the nations; but His Church has been faithless to its trust. Shall we also be found wanting?

If we are to declare, with any force and effectiveness, the truth committed to us, we are faced as a Society with a gigantic task of self-education and self-discipline. We only half understand as yet what our work for

\* There is evidence that in Germany some men have been imprisoned for "refusing to fight"—whether for reasons of conscience is not quite clear. (See *The Venture*, March, 1917, p. 187).

the world is ; some of us do not even believe in it at all. Few of us have wide knowledge of economic and international relations, such as is absolutely necessary if we are to win assent from the minds as well as from the religious instincts of men. We need knowledge of life, not merely that which we can gain from books, but knowledge that comes from wide practical service. We have to learn to give our message in terms that all can understand, and not in the language of an esoteric cult. And, at the same time, we cannot afford to be so immersed in even the best of work that none of us have time to think. We need that some at least of our members should devote much time and thought to the philosophic basis of our whole Christian position. It is not enough to talk superficially about the Inward Light, or the Brotherhood of men. We ought to have these great intuitions vitally related in our minds to the other truths we hold—on the one hand to the fundamental Christian doctrines of Incarnation and Atonement, and on the other to the facts disclosed by scientific and historical study. We need a doctrine of God that is large enough and strong enough to bring together belief in Evolution, belief in Redemption, belief in God's personal revelation to each human soul, and belief in the spiritual bonds that hold humanity together.\*

Friends need not have, and ought not to have, any fear of the effect on Christian faith of the most free and unfettered study of Science, of Biblical and historical criticism, of other religions, or of social and economic and international relations. God is great

\* " We have never properly established the basis of belief ; we have never properly outlined the spiritual truth of the indwelling God, and its relation to sin ; we have wanted consistency and courage properly to express in conduct and life, in social relations and ideas, the large practical consequences which that truth involved. It is the profound issue of the basis of belief, which in the last fifty years has again become acute." (J. WILHELM ROWNTREE, *Essays and Addresses*, p. 243).

enough to include them all, and there is none of them that does not throw light on His ways with man, Biblical criticism should be cordially welcomed by those whose faith rests, not in the letter of a record, but in the Spirit that brings home its meaning—that inspired and still inspires holy men and women. The comparative study of religions, however it may revolutionise traditional ideas, has no terrors for those who believe that

“ All souls that struggle and aspire,  
All hearts of prayer by Thee are lit ;  
And, dim or clear, Thy tongues of fire  
On dusky tribes and twilight centuries sit.

“ Nor bounds, nor clime, nor creed Thou know'st ;  
Wide as our need Thy favours fall ;  
The white wings of the Holy Ghost  
Stoop, seen or unseen, o'er the heads of all.”\*

As a fact, though this new study has been feared by some of us in the belief that it tended to place the human intellect above the Divine Spirit, and by others because it overthrew traditional notions of the Bible and its inspiration, we have, on the whole, been able to make room for it without serious difficulty ; and there are many signs that the widening vision it brings has helped and not hindered the religious life of those whose minds are open to it.

The demand on us is overwhelming, but we must awake to it if we are not to be found unworthy of the work we are called to do. The Conference of all branches of the Society of Friends, which is to be held in London after the war is over, by the invitation of London Yearly Meeting, should be one means of arousing our minds to the sort of education that we need ; and may, we fervently hope, prepare the way for us to speak once more to the world with a united voice.

## A SPECIAL TYPE OF MIND.

I wish, at this point to revert for a moment to an objection briefly touched on in the last chapter,\* that we cannot expect the truth we hold to reach and fill the needs of the great majority of our fellow-men. It is fitted, we are told, only for the few,—for those whose minds and dispositions are of a special and “mystical” type: who are able to find God in the secret chamber of their own consciousness with such richness and power that they can dispense with all the outward aids to religion that ordinary Christians need. I believe that this is the prevailing impression among devout Anglicans and Nonconformists when they speak of the Quakers with respect—sometimes with more respect than is our due, as when they call us “the salt of the earth.” A prominent Anglican recently compared the Quakers to one of the religious Orders, and said that he would certainly make room, in his ideal Church, for an “Order of St. George Fox.”

I believe that this is a profound mistake. There are, I am convinced, as many “varieties of religious experience” among the Friends as among the adherents of any other religious body. In all denominations there are a few people who are naturally “mystical” in temperament—subject to psychic waves with vivid consciousness of spiritual things, accompanied usually by intense emotion,—but a large majority who have no such experiences. I believe that the latter very greatly outnumber the former in the Society of Friends, and I say this with some little knowledge.

Now it is precisely to the “non-mystic,” to the person who is inclined to doubt whether he has any capacity for religious experience, that the Quaker gospel of the Light of God in all men ought to make a special appeal. It has never been identified, by those

\* See above, p. 198.

who knew what they were speaking of, with mystic visions or vivid conscious raptures. The message is, that the Light of Christ is in the souls of all who will follow obediently the best they know, whether they are aware of it or not. "Thou couldst not seek Me," wrote Pascal, "if thou hadst not already found Me."\* The appeal is universal, and it is necessary that we should so regard it if our missionary impulse is not to be dried up at the source.

"The Quaker message, if adequately set forth, will meet a very wide response. The hardened, the impenitent, the utterly careless, may need a more elementary, perhaps a sterner, call. But wherever there are seeking souls, restless, unsatisfied, agnostic, wherever there are spirits in prison crying out for light and liberty, there is the opportunity for the Quaker evangelist. To the great non-mystic majority his appeal should come with special power, for he can speak to them, as none other can whose gospel is less universal, of the unseen, unfelt Presence which is always seeking to express itself within them. He can interpret to them the meaning of that daily life which seems to them so barren; he can declare to them the unknown God for whom they are groping. If it be true, as we believe it is, that the spirit of unrest and of yearning for some scarcely defined good is more prevalent now than ever before, then the Golden Age of Quakerism should be in the near future."†

\* Compare Augustine (*Soliloquies*, Book X.): "Too late I loved Thee, O Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new. And lo! Thou wast within, and I searching for Thee abroad. Thou wast with me, but I was not with Thee."

† William Littleboy, *The Appeal of Quakerism to the Non-mystic*, p. 16. There is, however, this to be added: that anyone who would be a Quaker indeed must be prepared to pay the price. Quakerism is a very strenuous religion; it offers no attraction to those who can only find inward peace if they can discover some outward authority to tell them infallibly what they must believe and do. It leaves each man and

## THE GROWTH OF UNITY.

The greatest hope I see of our learning our lesson aright is in the drawing together of those whose differing types of religious experience, and whose varying theological conceptions, have kept them widely sundered—whether within one Quaker fold, as in England, or in separate camps as in America. Speaking of England only, we may perhaps distinguish four types of Quaker thought and life, in the order of their appearance, from early in the nineteenth century onwards: the *Conservative*, which held essential Quakerism, but with a rigidity in its application that left no room for the changes that new life made inevitable; the *Evangelical*, which found new life in Christ, but made it too much dependent on orthodox views of the Bible and the Atonement, and lost perception of the Inward Light; the *Intellectual*, which welcomed the freedom of the Inward Light as making room for unhindered enquiry into the foundations of religion and the history of the Bible; and the *Socialist*, which sought for a reconstruction of human society, as a necessary condition of realising the Brotherhood of man which the Inward Light revealed.

As yet we are far from complete agreement; but most of us gladly recognise that we have much to learn from those who see things differently from our-

woman with the burden and responsibility of finding his or her own way to God, and of deciding for himself or herself what is His authentic voice. What W. E. H. Lecky said of Puritanism applies *a fortiori* to the Quaker faith: "A religion which recognises no authority between man and his Creator, which asserts at once the dignity and duty of private judgment, and which, while deepening immeasurably the sense of individual responsibility, denudes religion of meretricious ornaments, and of most æsthetic aids, is pre-eminently a religion of men. Puritanism is the most masculine form that Christianity has yet assumed." (*Hist. of European Morals*, Vol. II., p. 368)

selves, and that all these elements are needed if we are to do our real work for the world. The faith we would fain hold, is not a dogmatic system to which all should be expected to agree; it is rather an atmosphere, a spirit, and a way of looking at life, which develops, we believe, the highest type of character and action. We need the depth and inwardness and steadiness of the Conservative; the enthusiasm and missionary zeal of the Evangelical; the wide outlook and mental freedom of the Intellectual; and the lofty ideal of human Brotherhood to which the Socialist calls us.

But, beyond everything else, we need in our own souls, and as the guiding star of our corporate progress, an inward revelation of our Master, Jesus Christ. Amidst all our perplexities, and even in the chaos and dissolution of war, it is to Him alone that we can look as the sure anchor of our faith, the Revealer of our God, the manifestation of His purpose for the race as well as for the individual. Separated from Him, and from His revelation of the Father, we shall but follow "wandering fires."

"Apart from the thought of God as we see Him set forth in Jesus, and the common consciousness of truth as revealed in lofty souls who have been touched by His spiritual fire, it is not evident how the faults of individual interpretation are to be corrected. If I give up external authority, I do not want to know only what man can be but what God is, and I want to see within the limits of human consciousness an identification or meeting-point between the soul of man and the unseen Spirit. If Jesus is that meeting-point or identification—a movement not merely of man towards a God who never answers, but of God towards men—then, with Jesus as the Gospel witnessed in the conscience of a civilisation infected by His Spirit,



I see the balance-wheel to the doctrine of the Inward Light."\*

" The world sits at the feet of Christ,  
Unknowing, blind and unconsolated ;  
It yet shall touch His garment's fold,  
And feel the heavenly Alchemist  
Transform its very dust to gold."†

THE END

J. Wilhelm Rowntree, *Essays and Addresses*, pp. 244, 245.

† Whittier, *The Over-Heart*.

## APPENDIX A

### SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY GROUPS

THE success of a Study Group depends very largely on the co-operative efforts of the members, and it is very important that each should endeavour to contribute something. All the members should at least do their best to read carefully beforehand the chapter of the text-book to be considered at any meeting of the Group, and to look out any Biblical references it may contain. Some of the chapters in this book, for example that on the Sacraments, may be found to contain more matter than can be dealt with profitably at a single meeting. In this case it should be divided, the work being planned out beforehand by the leader of the group. In addition to the text-book each member should endeavour to do some extra reading on the subject. Suggestions are made for this, under the different chapters, but it is not expected that every member will be able to read all the additional matter. Some can undertake to read a portion of this, and others another portion.

Questions and subjects for discussion are also given, but these should not be followed slavishly. The leader may find that other topics are interesting the members, and may prefer to frame different questions for them to consider. It will often be found helpful if two or three members will undertake to prepare very short written answers to questions, which should be read and discussed at the meeting. The endeavour has been made to embody a leading thought in the *last* question under each chapter, with the desire to focus discussion on a main issue.

A few boxes containing books of reference are available for the use of Study Groups. Where possible a fee of 2s. 6d. should be paid for the use of one of these, to cover a period of six months; and the cost of carriage should also be paid. Applications for boxes should be made to the Secretary of the Friends' Study Committee, Winifred Cramp, Dalefield, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE NATURE OF THE QUAKER MOVEMENT.

## READING :

Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, especially chapters XVII.-XX.  
 Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, Introduction and Chapter I.  
 William Penn, *Preface to George Fox's Journal*.

Westcott, *Social Aspects of Christianity*, Part II., Chapter III.,  
 "The Quakers."

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. What were the chief resemblances and differences between the "Seekers," "Ranters," and "Quakers," in the middle of the seventeenth century ?

2. In the light of historical instances, do you think that people who "receive the Spirit" become infallible (that is, incapable of making mistakes) ?

3. What does "the Spirit" mean in the New Testament ? Was it a temporary gift ? How do you explain the fact that many sincere and earnest persons are not conscious of receiving such a gift ?

## CHAPTER II.

## THE INWARD LIGHT.

## READING :

Grubb, *Authority and the Light Within*, especially chapters VII. to XIII.

Braithwaite, *Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1909).

Rufus Jones, *Social Law in the Spiritual World*, especially chapters on "The Inner Light" and "The Test of Spiritual Guidance."

Caroline E. Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, Chapter II., and *The Vision of Faith*, Chapter on "Divine Guidance."

Brayshaw, *Friends and the Inner Light* (pamphlet).

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. The early Quakers often spoke and wrote of other 'professing Christians as "walking in darkness." Do you think they were right in this, and that we could rightly do the same ?

2. Does the Inward Light lead people to opposite conclusions on matters of duty? How do you explain the fact that many young men believe it to be part of their Christian duty to fight for their country, while others are as firmly convinced to the contrary?

3. The commonest objection to the teaching of the early Quakers was that their doctrine of the Inward Light made Jesus Christ and His work for men unnecessary. How would you deal with this?

## CHAPTER III.

## WORSHIP AND MINISTRY.

## READING :

Hepher and others : *The Fellowship of Silence*, especially Part II.

Hepher : *The Fruits of Silence*, Part I.

Stephen : *Quaker Strongholds*. Chapter III.

*Worship and Ministry* (1899) and *Ministry and Our Meetings for Worship* (1911) : pamphlets issued by the Society of Friends, 136, Bishopsgate, E.C. 2.

*Friends' Book of Christian Discipline*, Part II. ("Christian Practice,") Chapters I. and V.

(These chapters contain extracts from the two pamphlets mentioned above).

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. Compare a Friends' Meeting for Worship with the Communion Service in the Church of England. Is the object aimed at the same?

2. It has been said that the Society of Friends only just escaped being killed by "the poverty of impromptu preaching." What do you think of this?

3. What is the meaning and purpose of Silence in public worship? Do you think that a meeting held habitually in entire silence can fulfil its object?

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SACRAMENTS.

## READING :

There is a dearth of Quaker literature on this subject written in the light of the modern historical study of the Bible. The following pamphlets may be mentioned :

R. H. Thomas, *Baptism* (Headley Brothers, 1d.).

Max I. Reich, *Outward Ordinances in the Light of the New Covenant*. (Headley Brothers, 3d.).

Georgina King Lewis, *The Eucharist* (Headley Brothers, 3d.).

Much historical information may be derived from the articles "Baptism," "Eucharist," and "Sacraments," in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* (either the large or the one-volume edition); and still more from the elaborate articles on these subjects in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*.

#### QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. What meanings are attached to infant baptism by different bodies of Christians who practise it? Do you think it ought to be undergone by those who are not old enough to understand it?
2. Compare the views of the Eucharist or Communion Service held by High Anglicans and by most Nonconformists. With which have you more sympathy?
3. What is the real meaning and value of the Sacramental idea, and do you think that Friends have been in danger of losing it?

### CHAPTER V.

#### CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

##### READING :

Harvey, *Rise of the Quakers*, Chapter VII. on "Organization."

Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, Chapter XIII. on "Church Organization."

Rowntree, J. S., *Micah's Mother* : a lecture (reprinted as Chapter II. of *John Stephenson Rowntree, his Life and Work*).

Grubb, *The Meaning of Membership*.

FOR REFERENCE : *Christian Discipline of the Society of Friends*, Vol. II., "Church Government."

##### QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. Is there any important difference of principle between the organization of the Society of Friends and that of any other religious body known to you, Roman, Anglican or Nonconformist?
2. Why did some of the early Quakers oppose the organization set up by George Fox? What do you think would have happened if they had succeeded, and why?

3. Why do Friends object to voting at their business meetings? Can you connect the method of conducting these meetings with the principle of the Inward Light?

4. Why is it important that all sincere Friends who are able to do so should attend, and take part in, meetings for Church affairs?

## CHAPTER VI.

## SIMPLICITY AND TRUTHFULNESS: JUDICIAL OATHS.

## READING:

Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, Chapter V., "Special Testimonies."

Rowntree, J. S., *The Society of Friends, its Faith and Practice*, section on "Christian Life and Practice" (pp. 24-31).

*Christian Discipline of the Society of Friends*, Part II., Chapter VII; Chapter XIII., Sections 2, 3, 6, 8; Chapter XIV., Section 2.

Emmott, *The Story of Quakerism*, Chapter V.

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do you think it a matter for regret that Friends in this country have mostly dropped peculiarities of dress and speech? Might they equally well drop their refusal to swear in courts of justice?

2. Why did the Society establish a different form of Marriage for its members from those used by other religious bodies?

3. Do you consider that Friends still maintain their testimony for truthfulness and integrity, in business and other affairs of daily life?

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE TESTIMONY FOR PEACE.

## READING:

Wilson, *Christ and War*, esp. Chapters I.-III.

Grubb, *The True Way of Life* (Third Edition), esp. chapters I., II., IV., VI.

Graham, *War from a Quaker Point of View*, esp. pp. 34-62.

*Christian Discipline*, Part II., Ch. XIV., sections 3, 4.

PAMPHLETS: W. Blair Neatby, *The Christian and War*.

*Our Testimony for Peace* (Society of Friends, 1912).

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. Does the fact that some of the early Quakers were soldiers, and that some of the leaders of the Quaker movement were not clear (just as some are not clear to-day) that war under all circumstances is wrong, invalidate our claim to have a corporate Testimony on the subject ?

2. Do you think that the command " Resist not him that is evil " (Matt. v. 39. R.V.) implies that police and prisons are contrary to the spirit of Christianity, as well as fighting ?

3. What is the connection between belief in the Inward Light and belief that the real defences of a nation are not material but moral ; and do you think that total disarmament by the British nation at the close of this war would involve its speedy destruction ?

## CHAPTER VIII.

## QUAKERISM AND POLITICS.

## READING :

Richard, *Memoirs of Joseph Sturge*, esp. Chapters III., XIV., XV.  
Sharpless, *Friends in Public Life* (pamphlet).

*Christian Discipline*, Part II., Chapter XIII., § 13 ; Ch. XIV., 4, 5.

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. Can a Christian rightly maintain the position that the government of a State is a purely " worldly " matter, with which he has no concern ? Can you point to any historical facts which illustrate the effects of this attitude ?

2. What do you think of the practice of Friends in Government positions allowing warlike preparations to be made by others, while refusing as far as possible to take part in such preparations themselves ? What ought a Quaker member of Parliament to do about votes of money for the Army and Navy ?

3. John Bright left the Liberal Government in 1882 when it undertook the bombardment of Alexandria. Many said he ought to have retired earlier, when the intervention that led up to the bombardment was decided on. What principles should guide a Friend under such circumstances ?

## CHAPTER IX.

## PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIAL REFORM.

## READING :

Rowntree, *Social Service : its Place in the Society of Friends*, esp. pp. 1-64.

Woolman, *Journal* (Edition 1883), especially Whittier's Introduction, and the Appendix, "A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich."

Grubb, *Christianity and Business*, esp. chapters V.-VIII.

*Christian Discipline*, Part II., ch. XIII. § 3, 8, 12, and ch. XIV. § 5.

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. Compare the attitude of Christian slave-holders in the eighteenth century with that of Christians who now support war.
2. Do you think that the evils of competition can be removed by social reforms like the Factory Acts and the regulation of wages ?
3. What kind of social order do you think would best express the Quaker ideal of life ?
4. Trace the connection between belief in the Inward Light and the desire to abolish social abuses.

## CHAPTER X.

## FRIENDS AND EDUCATION.

## READING :

John S. Rowntree, *his Life and Work*, chapters VIII. and X.

*The Education of the Democracy* (National Adult School Union, 1915).

*Christian Discipline*, Part II., ch. X.

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. What connection is there between the free ministry in the Society of Friends and the need for a high standard of Education ?
2. Compare the advantages of Boarding Schools and Day Schools : specially for training boys and girls (a) for service in the Society of Friends, (b) for service to the general community.
3. If compulsory military training were established in this country, and Friends' schools that refused to introduce it were threatened with



closure by the Government, would you approve of their accepting the recognition of schemes for training in social service, as an alternative to military training?

4. Ought the Society of Friends to secure that all its members receive instruction in its fundamental principles, and does it in fact do so?

## CHAPTER XI.

### MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

#### READING :

Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, chaps. viii., x., xvi.

Hodgkin, *Friends Beyond Seas*, especially chaps. ii., vi., vii.

E. E. Taylor, *Principles of Extension Work* (pamphlet).

#### QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION :

1. Was it a piece of arrogance for Quaker missionaries to call themselves "publishers of Truth"?

2. What do you think of the argument that we ought not to set out to "convert the heathen" until we have made our own nation truly Christian?

3. It has been said that if the Society of Friends refuses to provide support for mission workers who feel the call to devote their lives in this way, it prevents people from obeying the Divine call unless they have a substantial private income. What do you think of this?

4. Does belief in the universal Light of Christ in the souls of men make missionary work appear needless?

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE PRESENT OUTLOOK.

#### READING :

Hodgkin, *Friends Beyond Seas*, chap. viii.

Stephen, *Quaker Strongholds*, chap. vi.

Braithwaite and Hodgkin, *The Message and Mission of Quakerism* (two addresses).

Littleboy, *The Day of our Visitation* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1917), and *The Appeal of Quakerism to the Non-mystic* (pamphlet).

Rowntree, (J. Wilhelm), "The Present Position of Religious Thought in the Society of Friends," in *Essays and Addresses* (reprinted from the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, Jan. 1905.)

*The True Basis of Unity* (pamphlet).

## QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.:

1. Why should the Society of Friends feel a special concern for people who stand aloof from the other Churches ?
2. A Friend who was a salaried worker for the Y.M.C.A. in India was asked to resign his position on the ground that he had "not been baptized." What do you consider his right course would be ?
3. Do you think that Quakerism as a religion is suited for everybody ?

## APPENDIX B.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY.

THE following is a list of some of the more important recent books and pamphlets on the history and principles of the Society of Friends and kindred topics. It makes no claim to completeness. All may be obtained (if still in print) from the Friends' Bookshop, 140, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.

#### BOOKS,

Barton, George A. : *The Heart of the Christian Message* (1910).

Binns, Henry Bryan :

*Isaac Penington, Selections from his Writings and Letters.* Headleys,\*  
1s. 6d. net. and 2s. 6d. net.

Braithwaite, William C. :

*The Beginnings of Quakerism* (1912). Macmillan, 12s. net.

*The Second Period of Quakerism* (1919). Macmillan, 15s. net.

*Spiritual Guidance in Quaker Experience* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1909). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Braithwaite, William C., and Hodgkin, Henry T. :

*The Message and Mission of Quakerism* (1912). Headleys,\* 1s. net.

Cadbury, M. Christabel :

*Robert Barclay, His Life and Work* (1912). Headleys,\* 2s. net.

*Christian Discipline of the Society of Friends,*

Part II. ("Christian Practice," 1911). 1s. net.

Part III. ("Church Government," 1917). 1s. 6d. net.

Dorchester, Phoebe :

*John Stephenson Rowntree, His Life and Work* (1908). Headleys,\*  
6s. net.

Emmott, Elizabeth B. :

*The Story of Quakerism* (1908). Headleys,\* 3s. 6d. net. and 1s. net.

*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Article "Friends: Society of," by A.  
Neave Brayshaw.

*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, article "Friends, Society of,"  
by William C. Braithwaite.

*Facing the Facts* : (War and Social Order Conference Report, 1916),  
Headleys,\* 6d. net.

\* Now trading as The Swarthmore Press Ltd.

Fox, George :

*Journal* (Cambridge Edition, *verbatim* from original MS.) 1911.  
2 vols. Cambridge University Press, £1 1s. net

*Journal* (Bicentenary Edition, based on First Edition, edited by  
Thomas Ellwood, 2 vols., 5s. net.

Fox, R. Hingston :

*Dr. John Fothergill and his Friends* (1919). Macmillans, 21s net  
*Friends and the War* (Report of Llandudno Conference, 1914).

Headleys\* (out of print), 1s. net.

*Friends Ancient and Modern* (Bound Volume of short Biographies)  
Friends' Tract Association, 2s. net.

*Friends' Historical Society, Journal of* (Volumes I.-XIII., 1903-1915)  
Norman Penney, 136, Bishopsgate, E.C.2. 5s. per volume.

Fry, Joan M. :

*The Communion of Life* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1910). Headleys,\*  
1s. 6d. net (temporarily out of print).

Glover, T. R. :

*The Nature and Purpose of a Christian Society* (Swarthmore Lecture  
1912). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Graham, John W. :

*The Faith of a Quaker*. Cambridge University Press (forthcoming)  
*William Penn : Founder of Pennsylvania*. Headleys,\* 7s. 6d. net  
*War from a Quaker Point of View*. Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net. (Out  
of print.)

*Evolution and Empire*. (1912). Headleys,\* 2s. 6d. net.

Grubb, Edward :

*Authority and the Light Within* (1908). James Clarke & Co., 2s. net.

*The Personality of God* (1911). Headleys,\* 1s. net.

*The Historic and the Inward Christ* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1914).  
Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

*The True Way of Life* (Third Edition, 1915). Headleys,\* 2s. net.  
and 1s. net.

*Separations, their Causes and Effects* (1914). Headleys,\* 1s. net.

*Christianity and Business* (1912). T. Fisher Unwin, 2s. 6d.\* net.

*The Religion of Experience* (1919). Headleys,\* 5s. net.

Gummere, Amelia, M. :

*The Quaker, a Study in Costume* (1901). Ferris and Leach, Phila-  
delphia.

*The Quaker in the Forum* (1910). John C. Winston, Philadelphia.  
6s.

\* Now trading as The Swarthmore Press Ltd,

Harvey, T. Edmund :

*The Rise of the Quakers* (1905). Headleys.\*

*A Wayfarer's Faith* (1913). Wells Gardner, Darton & Co.,  
1s. 6d. net.

Heath, Carl :

*Pacifism in Time of War*. Headleys,\* 1s. net. and 2s. net.

*The Pacific Settlement of International Disputes*. Headleys,\* 1s. net.

Hepher, Cyril :

*The Fellowship of Silence*. Macmillan, 4s. 6d. net.

*The Fruits of Silence*. Macmillan, 4s. 6d. net.

Hobhouse, Stephen :

*Joseph Sturge, his Life and Work* (1919). Dent, 2s. 6d. net.

Hodgkin, Henry T. :

*Friends Beyond Seas* (1916). Headleys,\* 3s. 6d. net. and 2s. 6d. net.

*The Missionary Spirit and the Present Opportunity* (Swarthmore  
Lecture, 1916). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

*Lay Religion* (1919). Headleys, 3s. 6d. net.

Hodgkin, Henry T. and Braithwaite, W. C. :

*The Message and Mission of Quakerism* (1912). 1s. net.

Hodgkin, Thomas :

*The Trial of our Faith* (1911). Macmillan, 7s. 6d. net.

*George Fox* (1896). Methuen & Co., 2s. net.

*Human Progress and the Inward Light* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1911)  
Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Hodgkin, L. Violet :

*Silent Worship, the Way of Wonder* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1919).

Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Jones, Rufus M. :

*Studies in Mystical Religion* (1909). Macmillan, 12s. net.

*Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1914).  
Macmillan, 10s. 6d. net.

*The Quakers in the American Colonies* (1911). Macmillan,  
12s. net.

*The Inner Life* (1916). Macmillan, 3s. 6d. net.

*Social Law in the Spiritual World* (1904). Headleys,\* 2s. 6d. net.

*George Fox: an Autobiography* (1903). Headleys,\* 3s. 6d. net.

*The Double Search: Atonement and Prayer* (1906). Headleys,\*  
2s. net and 1s. net.

\* Now trading as The Swarthmore Press Ltd.

Jones, Rufus M. (*continued*):

*A Dynamic Faith* (1901). Headleys,\* 1s. net.

*Quakerism: a Religion of Life.* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1908). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

*Children of the Light: a little Book of Selections* (1909) Headleys,\* 2s. net.

Lewis, Georgina King:

*Elizabeth Fry* (1909). Headleys,\* 4s. 6d. net. and 1s. 6d. net.

*John Greenleaf Whittier* (1913). Headleys,\* 4s. 6d. net.

Littleboy, William:

*The Day of our Visitation* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1917). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net. and 6d. net.

Morland, Lucy F.:

*The New Social Outlook* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1918). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Penn, William:

*The Peace of Europe* and other Essays, and *The Fruits of Solitude*, (1916). 1s. 3d.

Richardson, Dorothy M.:

*Gleanings from the Works of George Fox.* Headleys,\* 1s. net. and 2s.

Robson, S. E.:

*Joshua Rowntree* (1916). George Allen and Unwin, 4s. 6d. net.

Rowntree, John Stephenson:

*The Society of Friends, its Faith and Practice* (1901). Headleys,\* 1s. net and 6d. net.

Rowntree, John Wilhelm:

*Essays and Addresses.* Headleys,\* 5s. net.

*Palestine Notes.* Headleys,\* 2s. 6d. net. 9d. and 1s. (Special Edition.)

Rowntree, Joshua:

*Social Service: its Place in the Society of Friends* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1913). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Rowntree, Maurice L.:

*Co-operation or Chaos.* Headleys,\* 6d. net.

Sharpless, Isaac:

*Quakerism and Politics* (1905). Ferris and Leach, Philadelphia.

*William Penn, Selections* (1909). Headleys,\* 1s. net.

Shore, W. Tennyngmouth:

*John Woolman, His Life and our Times* (1913). Macmillan, 5s. net.

\* Now trading as The Swarthmore Press Ltd.

Stephen, Caroline E. :

*Quaker Strongholds*. Headleys,\* 2s. 6d. and 1s. net.

*Light Arising* (1908). Headleys\*, 3s. 6d. net.

*The Vision of Faith* (1911, with Memoir). Headleys,\* 3s. 6d. net.  
*Swanwick*, 1911 (Report of Young Friends' Conference). Headleys,\*  
 1s. net.

Thompson, Silvanus P. :

*The Quest for Truth* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1915). Headleys,\*  
 1s. 6d. net.

Trevelyan, George M. :

*The Life of John Bright* (1913). Constable, 15s. net.

Unwin, Ernest E. :

"*As a Man Thinketh*" : *The Personal Problem of Militarism*  
 (1919). George Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d. net.

*Whence Come Wars?* (War and Social Order Papers, 1916). Headleys,  
 1s. net.

Whittier, John G. :

*Poems* (various editions).

*The Journal of John Woolman*, with an Introduction (1883).  
 Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

Wilson, William E. :

*Christ and War* (1913). James Clarke & Co., 1s. net and 1s. 6d. net.

*Atonement and Non-resistance*. Headleys,\* 6d. net. and 1s. net.

Wood, Herbert G. :

*George Fox* (1912). National Free Church Council, 1s. net.

*The Two Swords : a Dialogue on the Christian Conscience and the  
 War* (1916). Birmingham, Cornish Brothers, 9d. net.

Woolman, John :

*Journal* (Chalfont Library). Headleys,\* 1s. 6d. net.

#### PAMPHLETS.

The number of pamphlets issued in late years is very great, and only a small selection can be given here, under the heads of the various publishers.

FRIENDS' BOOKSHOP, 140, Bishopsgate, E.C.2.

William Whiting, *The Society of Friends and What it Stands for*, 1d.

A. Neave Brayshaw, *Friends and the Inner Light*. 1d.

FRIENDS' HOME MISSION AND EXTENSION COMMITTEE, 15, Devonshire  
 St., Bishopsgate, E.C.2.

William G. Flewin, *The Oneness of Life*, 1d.

Jonathan B. Hodgkin, *The Public Worship of the Society of Friends*,  
 1d. *Woman's Place in the Church*, 1d.

\* Now trading as The Swarthmore Press Ltd.

## FRIENDS' PEACE COMMITTEE, 136, Bishopsgate, E.C.2 :

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